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ABSTRACT

Appropriate for secondary school social studies, this booklet outlines approaches for dealing with the threat of nuclear warfare in six sections. The first section, "Learning to Live with Nuclear Weapons," introduces the topic and considers what can be done to decrease the risk of nuclear warfare without jeopardizing the nation's security. "Arms Control" discusses the importance of the negotiation process. "Peace through Strength" stresses the need to display military strength to deal with the threat from the Soviet Union. "Freezing the Arms Race" advocates a bilateral freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons while "Unilateral Reductions" argues that nuclear weapons are a threat in and of themselves. The sixth section, "Complex Issues, Hard Choices," concludes the booklet by stressing the need for citizen participation. Two self-administered questionnaires intended for completion before and after participating in a public forum or reading the booklet are included as well as a list of recommended readings. (IS)

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NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

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This nation faces some hard choices about the role of nuclear arms in its defense effort

★ What can be done to decrease the risk of nuclear war without jeopardizing the nation's security?

An open discussion for concerned citizens

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Nuclear Arms and National Security

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As you begin to read this issue book from the Domestic Policy Association, you are joining thousands of Americans who are participating, in communities all over the country, in the 1983 season of the National Issues Forum. This is a collaborative effort to achieve an ambitious goal: to bring Americans together every year to address urgent domestic issues.

This series was conceived and organized by the Domestic Policy Association, which represents the pooled resources of a nationwide network of organizations—including libraries and colleges, museums and membership groups, service clubs and community organizations. It is a nonpartisan effort that does not advocate any specific solution or point of view. Its interest is in exploring, in unbiased fashion, the costs and benefits of various alternatives.

The forums are an occasion in which people can get together to learn more about the issues and the options this nation faces, to air their differences, and to begin to identify their common ground. What took place this past year in the inaugural season of the National Issues Forum indicates how many Americans are eager to do just that.

But the National Issues Forum doesn't begin and end in those local meetings. The DPA schedules a series of meetings in which the views that emerge from these forums are conveyed to elected leaders. This past February, at the Gerald R. Ford Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan, former Presidents Ford and Carter presided over a meeting attended by a distinguished group of individuals who have helped to devise public policy and to lead the nation in recent years. They gathered together to examine what came out of last year's community forums. This coming March, the same kind of gathering will take place in Austin, Texas, at the Lyndon B. Johnson Library.

What will happen there is that once again a group of national leaders will sit down to examine what the community forums have yielded. They are interested in your considered judgment about each of the three topics for this year's forums. So that your feelings and thoughts about these issues can be conveyed in those meetings, we have provided a short "Issue Report" at the beginning and end of these books. I urge you to fill it out and mail it back to us.

We have prepared issue books like this one for each of the three topics that will be addressed in this year's forums: priorities for the nation's schools, nuclear arms and national security, and the deficit and the federal budget. These are urgent issues that have been prominent in the news. In each of these areas, new realities have to be faced, and important choices made. To address them is to raise serious questions about our values and priorities; they cannot be viewed only from the perspective of particular interests or partisan politics.

Helping citizens to engage in community discussions about what is in the public interest is the goal of the Domestic Policy Association. As the editor of these issue books, I'm honored to welcome you to this common effort.

Keith Melville

Keith Melville
Editor-in-Chief
The National Issues Forum

Domestic Policy Association
5335 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, OH 45429

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

1. NUCLEAR ARMS AND NATIONAL SECURITY REPORT

The Domestic Policy Association has promised to communicate a sense of your thinking on the topic of nuclear disarmament to leaders and policy-makers, locally and at the national level. Therefore, we'd like you to fill out this short questionnaire so that we can get a "profile" of the way people here are thinking about this important issue. They are also going to be interested in the way that forums like this help us all to "think through" such complex problems.

For that reason, we'd like you to answer one set of questions BEFORE you talk with your fellow citizens at the forum meeting (or before you read this booklet, if you buy it elsewhere), and another set of questions AFTER the forum (or after you've read and thought about the booklet).

The leader at the forum meeting will ask you to hand in these question sheets at the beginning and at the end of the meeting. If it is inconvenient to do that, or if you can't attend the meeting, please send the questionnaire, together with the questionnaire at the end of the booklet, to the DPA in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

I Check the appropriate box:

1. If there were a nuclear war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, what would most likely happen to the U.S.? Would it:

   - ☐ Cease to exist as a civilized society
   - ☐ Suffer enormous casualties and losses, but recover within a decade or two
   - ☐ Hardly be affected at all
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

2. Thinking about the arms control agreements the U.S. has signed with the Soviet Union, would *you* say:

   - ☐ The Soviets have probably cheated at every opportunity
   - ☐ The Soviets have probably cheated a little
   - ☐ The Soviets have probably not cheated at all
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

3. When it comes to those same agreements, would you say:

   - ☐ The U.S. has probably cheated at every opportunity
   - ☐ The U.S. has probably cheated a little
   - ☐ The U.S. has probably not cheated at all
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

4. On balance, have the arms control agreements we've signed with the Soviet Union made the world a safer or a more dangerous place?

   - ☐ They've made the world safer
   - ☐ They've made the world more dangerous
   - ☐ They've made little or no difference
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

5. In an overall sense, how would you rate the military strength of the U.S. compared to that of the Soviet Union? Would you say:

   - ☐ We are far ahead of the Soviet Union in overall military strength
   - ☐ We are slightly ahead
   - ☐ We are about even
   - ☐ We are slightly behind
   - ☐ We are far behind the Soviet Union in overall military strength
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

6. Thinking just in terms of nuclear weapons, how would you rate the strength of the U.S. compared to that of the Soviet Union? Would you say:

   - ☐ We are far ahead of the Soviet Union in terms of nuclear weapons
   - ☐ We are slightly ahead
   - ☐ We are about even
   - ☐ We are slightly behind
   - ☐ We are far behind the Soviet Union in terms of nuclear weapons
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

II Here's a list of statements. For each one, indicate whether you agree or disagree:

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
7. The whole idea of a nuclear war is so terrifying, I try not to think about it	☐	☐	☐
8. The Soviet Union is the source of evil in the modern world	☐	☐	☐
9. The best way to keep the Soviet Union from starting trouble is to make sure our missiles are bigger and better than theirs are	☐	☐	☐
10. The U.S. should take steps on its own to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world, no matter what the Soviet Union does	☐	☐	☐
11. We are much too fearful of the Soviet Union; they have so many problems of their own, the last thing they want is to start a war	☐	☐	☐
12. If there is a nuclear war, it will probably be started by accident	☐	☐	☐
13. The best way to avoid a nuclear war is to be fully ready to fight one	☐	☐	☐
14. Our best hope for reducing the threat of nuclear war is to take small steps, not big ones, and to keep on negotiating without letting down our guard	☐	☐	☐

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
15. Our best hope for freeing ourselves from the threat of nuclear war is to develop new technologies such as lasers in outer space before the Russians do	☐	☐	☐
16. Because of satellites and other sophisticated equipment, we really do not need on-site inspection to learn what the Russians are doing	☐	☐	☐
17. It is inevitable that somewhere down the road, we and the communists will end up going to war.	☐	☐	☐
18. Nuclear weapons are so complex, citizens cannot realistically contribute to policy discussions and the whole area should be left to the President and the experts	☐	☐	☐
19. The very idea of having enough nuclear weapons to blow up everyone in the world many times over is insane	☐	☐	☐
20. The Soviet Union is like most other countries in the world — not much better and not much worse.	☐	☐	☐

21. It's hard to imagine the awesome responsibility of the President of The United States, but if you had his authority to protect the country and promote the national security, which of the following options would you favor? (check one)

- ☐ A. Build up our nuclear forces to make sure that our missiles and nuclear capability are the best in the world
- ☐ B. Try to balance but not surpass the Soviet Union in terms of nuclear weapons so as to promote stability and not frighten each other
- ☐ C. Negotiate an immediate halt to the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, so that both sides will take no further steps
- ☐ D. Have the U.S. take steps on its own to reduce its number of nuclear missiles, no matter what the Soviet Union may do.
- ☐ E. Not sure

22. Which would you *least* favor?

☐ A ☐ D
☐ B ☐ E
☐ C

III

There's been a debate surrounding each of the weapon systems listed below. Do you have a clear understanding, a general understanding, or no real understanding of the debate about: (check the appropriate box for each)

	Clear	General	No real	Not Sure
23. The MX missile	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Pershing missiles in Europe	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Cruise missiles in Europe	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Anti-missile laser weapons in outer space	☐	☐	☐	☐

IV

Whether you feel that you have a clear understanding of the issue or not, would you say you favor or oppose each of the following, or do you feel you just don't know enough to decide at this time:

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
27. Building the MX missile — Do you favor or oppose the U.S. building the MX missile, or do you feel that you just don't know enough to decide at this time?	☐	☐	☐
28. Putting Pershing missiles in Europe do you favor or oppose putting U.S. Pershing missiles into Europe, or do you feel that you just don't know enough to decide at this time?	☐	☐	☐
29. Putting cruise missiles in Europe — favor, oppose, or just don't know at this time?	☐	☐	☐
30. Trying to build anti-missile laser weapons in outer space — favor, oppose, or do you feel that you just don't know enough to decide at this time?	☐	☐	☐

V

These last few questions are for statistical purposes only:

31. Which of these age groups are you in?

☐ Under 18 ☐ 45 to 64
☐ 18 to 29 ☐ 65 and over
☐ 30 to 44

32. What is the last grade of school you completed?

☐ 8th grade or less
☐ 1 to 3 years of high school
☐ High school graduate
☐ Some college
☐ College grad. or more

33. Are you registered as a Democrat, Republican, an Independent, or are you not registered to vote?

☐ Democrat ☐ Other
☐ Republican ☐ Not registered to vote
☐ Independent

34. What was your total family income for 1982?

☐ Under $10,000 ☐ $30,000 to $40,000
☐ $10,000 to $20,000 ☐ $40,000 to $50,000
☐ $20,000 to $30,000 ☐ Over $50,000

35. Do you have children below the age of 18?

☐ Yes ☐ No

36. Are you male or female?

☐ Male ☐ Female

37. What is your zip code? _____

38. Which, if any, of the following DPA activities did you participate in?

☐ Read the booklet ☐ Read the discussion guide
☐ Attended a forum ☐ None of the above

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

Nuclear Arms and National Security

Prepared for the
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THE DOMESTIC POLICY ASSOCIATION

The Domestic Policy Association is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association devoted to raising the level of public awareness and discussion about important public issues. It consists of a nationwide network of institutions — colleges and universities, libraries, service clubs, membership groups and civic organizations — that bring citizens together to discuss public issues. The DPA represents their joint effort to enhance what they already do by working with a common schedule and common materials. In addition to convening meetings each fall in hundreds of communities in every region of the country, the DPA also convenes meetings at which it brings citizens and national leaders together to discuss these issues and the outcome of community forums.

Each year, participating institutions select the topics that will be discussed in the Issue Forums. On behalf of the Domestic Policy Association, the Public Agenda Foundation — a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and education organization that devises and tests new means of taking national issues to the public — prepares issue books and discussion guides for use in these forums. The Domestic Policy Association welcomes questions about the program, and invites individuals and organizations interested in joining this network to write to: The Domestic Policy Association, 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45429.

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"The best way to reduce the risk of nuclear confrontation is to keep the negotiation process going, to prevent anything that is destabilizing and to seek areas of agreement as a way of eventually reducing arms."

3 **PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH: IF YOU WANT PEACE, PREPARE FOR WAR** 19

"Military weakness leads to war. Faced with the Soviet threat, the only way to assure the peace is to maintain enough military might to deter attack and to prevent intimidation."

4 **FREEZING THE ARMS RACE: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH** 25

"To continue the arms race is unnecessary, unaffordable, and dangerous. Our best hope is to stop the arms race now by agreeing to a bilateral freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons."

5 **UNILATERAL REDUCTIONS: IF YOU WANT PEACE, PREPARE FOR PEACE** 31

"The biggest threat to peace and security is nuclear weapons themselves. Because there are no circumstances in which their use could be justified, we should get rid of them — and rely on conventional weapons for our defense."

6 **COMPLEX ISSUES, HARD CHOICES** 38

"Many people prefer not to think about how to maintain peace and security at a time of unparalleled danger. But questions of this magnitude can't be left to the experts. And neither slogans nor fear are a substitute for prudent judgment."

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1

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS

> "What can be done to decrease the risk of nuclear war without jeopardizing the nation's security?"

Consider what is expected of the President in his twin roles as chief executive and commander-in-chief. His primary duty is to protect the nation's security. That means protecting the American people, its institutions, and its territory from foreign aggression. It means protecting U.S. economic interests. It means deterring other nations from threatening our vital interests, as well as those of our allies and friends. It means maintaining, in conjunction with our allies, the military capability necessary to check the military expansion of any other country, such as the Soviet Union, particularly where it threatens the interests of the United States. The President has the ultimate responsibility for seeing that the nation's defense capabilities are adequate to the task, and deciding how and when they will be used.

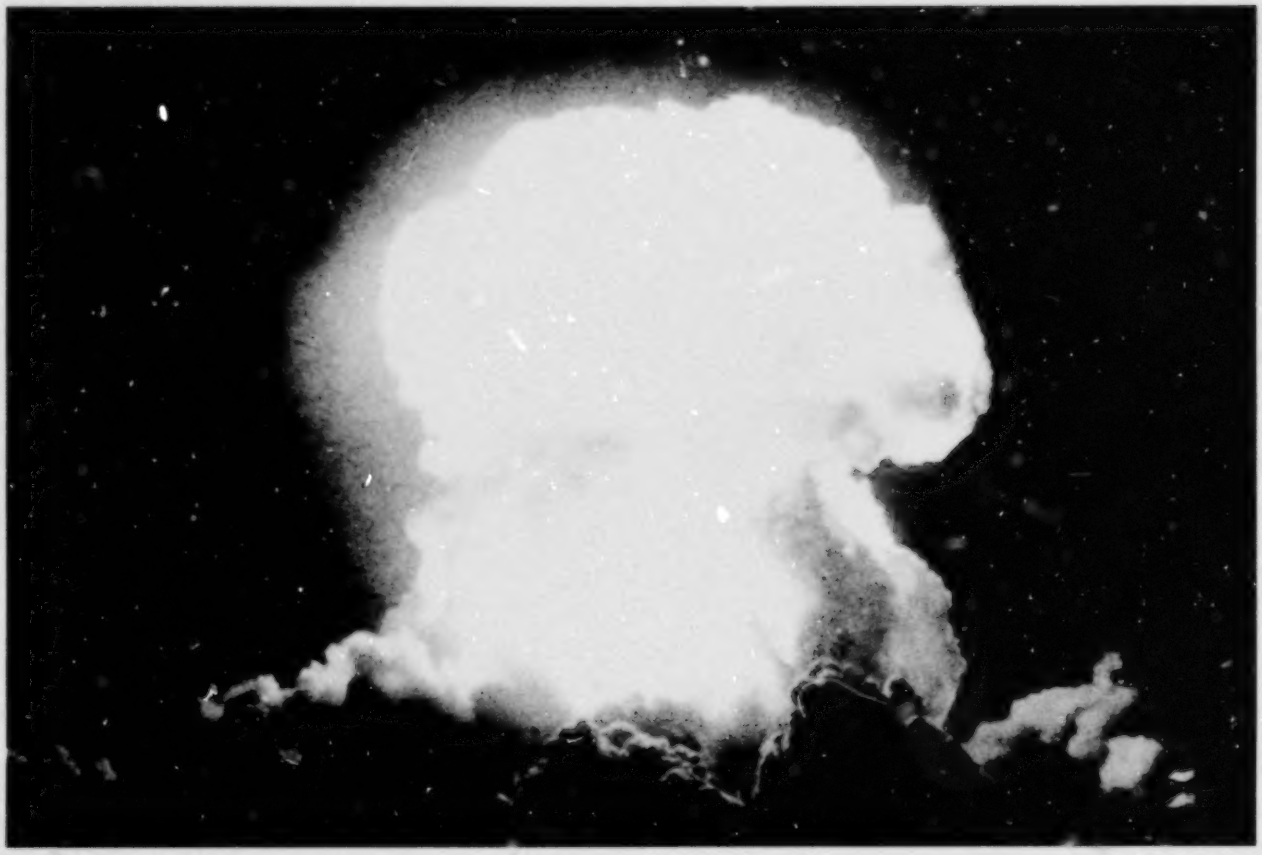
Since the era of nuclear weapons began 38 years ago when bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki — causing, in the words of Pope Paul VI, "butchery of untold magnitude" — that has become an awesome and fateful responsibility. The image of what Hiroshima looked like within a matter of seconds after the bomb hit — a flattened, devastated plain, a city instantly reduced to rubble — and the image of the mushroom cloud that hovered above are fixed in our minds, a constant reminder of the new era we have entered.

Warfare itself is as old as human history, and disarmament as a means recommended for avoiding it goes back at least as far as Biblical times. But with the detonation of the first nuclear bombs 38 years ago, the nature of war itself changed. By vastly increasing the devastation that war causes, these new weapons opened the era of war that is unwinnable or, if "winnable," still likely to leave a world not fit for either victor or vanquished. They raise the awful prospect of sudden and wholesale destruction of human life, unimaginable suffering, and irretrievable damage to the environment.

Most people who comprehend the devastation that would probably result if these weapons were ever used, agree that, if we could, we should surely "ban the bomb," abolish it forever. But we cannot step backwards. We cannot uncreate what we have created or unlearn what we know. So we have the responsibility of learning to live with these weapons, or learning how to defend ourselves without them.

The very existence of nuclear weapons poses some truly difficult choices not just for the nation's leaders, but for the rest of us as well, whose fate the President holds in his hands. Thinking about these weapons and the dilemmas they pose, we confront the central paradox of the nuclear era: We build these weapons for our protection, so that the President can carry out his responsibility to defend the nation's security. But as the arms race continues, and both the number and the sophistication of nuclear arms increases, simply having those arms may pose an increasing threat to our security.

And so we come to the basic questions: How should we think about nuclear arms and their proper place in our national



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security efforts? What can be done to decrease the risk of nuclear devastation without jeopardizing the nation's security?

A GROWING PUBLIC CONCERN

A generation of Americans grew up in the 1950s and 1960s with the image of that mushroom cloud in the back of their minds. Yet for the most part, people put the potential horror of nuclear war out of mind. As nuclear weapons systems grew in number and in sophistication, there was relatively little public protest. The debate over waging war and peace in the nuclear era was mainly restricted to those few — a small group of scientists, military men, defense contractors, and foreign policy experts — who had mastered the specialized vocabulary of the new weapons systems.

For the better part of a generation, most people who were concerned about nuclear weapons and nuclear war didn't speak out about it, partly out of a natural aversion to the prospect of the devastation it would cause. As John Mack, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard put it, people tended to avoid the subject in ordinary conversation because "it isn't easy to talk about the fact that you don't think your kids are going to grow up because of nuclear war."

"It is right that each succeeding generation should question anew the manner in which its leaders exercise such awesome responsibilities. It is right that each new Administration should have to confront the awful dilemmas posed by the possession of nuclear weapons. It is right that our nuclear strategy should be exposed to continuous examination."
—Alexander Haig

GLOSSARY

Ballistic Missile: A missile, classified by range, which is propelled by a rocket. The rocket's thrust determines the missile's course and point of impact. Such missiles cannot change course in mid-flight.

Cruise Missile: Small, unmanned airplanes carrying either nuclear or non-nuclear warheads. They can be launched from the air, ground or sea and can be guided all the way to their target.

First-Strike: The first offensive move (attack) in a nuclear war.

Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM): A land-based ballistic missile capable of delivering one or more nuclear warheads at a distance of 3,000 miles or more.

Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM): A ballistic missile with a range of 1,000 to 3,000 miles.

Kiloton: A measure of the yield of a nuclear weapon, equivalent to 1,000 tons of TNT. The Hiroshima bomb had a yield of approximately 14 kilotons.

Launch-on-Warning: The launch of missiles after one side receives a warning that enemy missiles are on the way, but before there has been any nuclear detonation.

Missile-Experimental (MX): An advanced U.S. ICBM, still in the development stage, designed to carry ten warheads, each of which has a 335 kiloton yield.

Second-Strike: A follow-up or retaliatory attack. Describes the capacity to inflict damage even after suffering a nuclear attack.

Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM): A ballistic missile launched from a submarine.

Strategic Weapon: A long-range weapon designed to destroy targets in an adversary's country.

Triad: The term used to refer to the 3 "legs" of U.S. strategic forces—the land-based ICBM, the sea-based SLBM, and the long-range (strategic) bomber.

Warhead: The part of the missile that explodes and causes damage to the target.

Yield: The destructive power of a nuclear explosion expressed in tonnage of TNT.

Over the past two years, however, many people have begun to take an unflinching look at what nuclear war would mean. They now comprehend with chilling clarity how a nuclear attack would affect their families, their communities, and the ability of the environment to sustain human life. Both here and abroad, the public is undeniably concerned about the risk posed by the development and deployment of nuclear arms, and at the peril created by an international arsenal of some 50,000 nuclear weapons. That concern has grown as tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union have escalated.

A massive anti-nuclear demonstration that took place in New York's Central Park in June, 1982, was the most visible symbol of the public's new concern. The point of the nationwide outpouring of protest that led up to that demonstration was to "send the leaders a message," to make it clear that many people are no longer content to assume that the President — and a small group of military and foreign policy experts — knows best about issues of nuclear arms and national security.

The meaning of that demonstration in Central Park, and the significance of so many public meetings that have taken place in the months since then was summarized earlier this year when 262 Roman Catholic bishops met in Chicago to address the issue of nuclear arms. "The meaning of this moment," said the leader of that group, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, "is not about weapons systems, megatonnage or complicated treaties. It resides in the vivid awareness people have of the danger of our times and the public determination that governments be challenged to take decisive steps against the nuclear threat."

The issue of nuclear arms and national security has become a public concern, and the real question now is whether we as individual citizens can come to terms with it, in all its complexity. We don't need to become military experts or diplomats, sophisticated in foreign policy. But we need to look at our nation's policies about nuclear weapons because they raise so many questions about who we are. These are moral questions that reflect our values; fiscal questions that reflect the way we distribute our resources and political questions that reflect the way we participate in the decision-making process of democracy.

A MOST CONFUSING ISSUE

For all the attention that has been devoted over the past two years to the issue of nuclear arms, this remains for many people a most confusing issue. Considering the difficulties of comprehending the issue and understanding what our options are in providing for the national security in an era of nuclear weapons, that confusion is understandable. For one thing, so much of what is written and said about nuclear weapons seems hopelessly technical. There are discussions of "counterforce capability" and "megatonnage." Many people feel that they have to learn the specifications of the B-1 bomber or the design of MX missile "dense packs" before entering the debate.

Alain Keler/SYGMA

In Brussels, as elsewhere in Europe, many oppose the planned deployment of the Pershing II and the ground-launched cruise missile.

It is difficult too because there are so many conflicting assessments, so many contradictory proposals. What sense does it make, after all, for members of the U.S. Senate first to approve arms control measures, then to vote funds for the MX missile, which will be the most powerful weapon in the nation's arsenal? Some people say that the chief threat to the nation's security lies in the inadequacy of our weapons, while others say that the flaw is in our perceptions of the Soviet leaders and their intentions. Some people have become increasingly concerned that we have too few nuclear weapons at the same time that others are concluding that we simply have too many of them.

Believing that an arms build-up would neither provide more security nor improve the climate for successful arms negotiations, many people have come to support a U.S.-Soviet freeze on nuclear weapons. Others — and a good many experienced and well-informed people are among them — are unhappy with the "freeze" proposal, and regard it as little more than a bumper sticker slogan. Their point is that national security in a dangerous world is no simple matter, and that it would be foolish and dangerous to underestimate the Soviet threat. They argue that the most prudent course is to take quite a different course, to "arm to disarm," to accept the premise of nuclear deterrence, that the best way of preventing war is to prepare for it and be better equipped than our opponents.

Another reason why this is such a difficult issue to address is, quite simply, that most of us would prefer not to ponder the possibility of our own destruction. What is required of us, if we are to address the issue of nuclear arms, is extraordinarily difficult. In the words of psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton, what we must do is "to imagine a nuclear holocaust, while not allowing ourselves to be paralyzed with fear."

There is a final reason why this is so difficult an issue to face. As the deliberations of the Roman Catholic bishops earlier this year demonstrated, the question of how to provide for the national security in an age of nuclear arms poses the most troubling moral issues. At the heart of the Christian tradition is the abhorrence of violence of all kinds and the commandment not to kill, to hold life sacred. At the heart of the deterrence theory which has guided American policy for several decades, however, is the assumption that — under certain circumstances — we must be ready to use weapons which may kill hundreds of millions of people, and be prepared to use them *before* any similar attacks have hit us.

In their draft letter, the bishops concluded that this country

must never annihilate cities — not even in retaliation for attack on American cities. Then later, reconsidering what it would mean if this nation rejected the principle of deterrence — if we took a position of unilateral disarmament — they changed their minds, and agreed that the principle of deterrence might be tolerated for a while, if serious efforts were being made meanwhile to reduce and finally to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Considering the complexity of the issue, and the troubling questions it raises, it is no wonder that so many people have preferred until recently not to think about it, to leave it to the experts.

But what the Roman Catholic bishops did earlier this year is what many Americans feel they must do: think the issue through, even if that requires grappling with its complexity, facing the difficult moral choices it poses, and balancing various goals and values, among them the need to protect the nation's security.

FOUR APPROACHES TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE

What is it, exactly, that we need to think about if we are to understand differing perspectives on nuclear arms and national security? There is, after all, a wide range of related issues — about arms control proposals, weapons, and doctrine. If you were to assemble a panel of experts on any of these issues and ask them what should be done, you would hear widely varying judgments about such questions as "How much is enough?" and "Is it important to have the biggest and best nuclear arsenal?" There are real differences about such basic matters as what the chief threat to our national security is, what the intentions of the Soviet leaders are, and what is the most sensible approach to minimize the likelihood of nuclear confrontation while protecting our national interests. And more and more thoughtful people assume that the greatest danger lies not with the Soviets but with other far less responsible nations who have nuclear weapons almost within their grasp.

"The issue of nuclear arms and national security has become a public concern. The real question now is whether we as individual citizens can come to terms with it in all its complexity."

Our purpose in this issue book is to provide a framework for discussing the basic questions raised by nuclear arms — by examining four different positions, comparing the assumptions of the people who take each of these positions, as well as the concerns of their critics. First, we are going to look at the view that the wisest path is to pursue the objective of keeping the balance between our military strength and that of the Soviets through negotiated arms agreements. Next, we will examine the conviction that the best way to avoid war is to be prepared to fight and win — the "peace through strength" position. A third position is distinctly different: that a bilateral freeze on nuclear weapons is the best course of action. And the fourth point of view that we shall consider argues that since there are no circumstances in which the use of nuclear weapons could be justified, we should get rid of them — unilaterally, if necessary — and depend upon conventional weapons for our defense.

Proponents of these four positions have very different perspectives on the question of what weapons this nation needs, and what the consequences would be of choosing not to develop them. After we have considered the tradeoffs each entails and thought its implications through, we may find ourselves not quite in agreement with any of them. But because these are all arguable points of view and lead us to quite different national strategies, we shall illustrate the differences between them by asking how their proponents think about one or two of the specific weapons in this country's nuclear arsenal.

In any year, many different strategic decisions have to be taken about our national defense. Just now, for example, three decisions are being made about what needs to be done to bolster the nation's nuclear forces. In December, there are plans to deploy two kinds of American weapons in Europe — Pershing II missiles, and land-based cruise missiles—to strengthen NATO defenses. There has also been a great deal of discussion and congressional debate about the development and deployment by the late 1980s of a new intercontinental missile, the MX (for "missile experimental"), which has more warheads and is more accurate than any other intercontinental missile in our arsenal. And since March, 1983, when President Reagan suggested the development of space-based weaponry designed to "intercept and destroy" incoming enemy missiles, there has been widespread discussion too about the next generation of the arms race. So let us first quickly make sure that we understand what is at issue with regard to the MX missile, the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe, and the development of outer space weaponry; then, in the following sections, we will ask how each of our four points of view sees these various weapons. Again, none of us need come to any conclusions about the use of these weapons, but referring to them will help us understand what is entailed in the positions we take.

WHO'S AHEAD IN THE ARMS RACE?

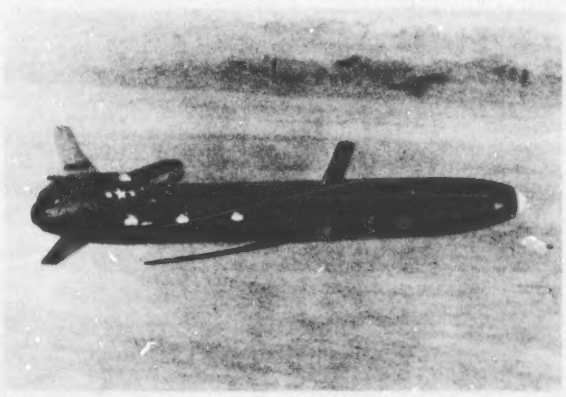
Soon after he came to office in 1981, President Reagan stated that the Soviet Union has a "margin of superiority" over the United States in nuclear striking power. That remark provoked a good deal of debate over the comparative strength of the two nation's armed forces. Because the nuclear forces of the United States and the Soviet Union are quite different, the answer to the question of who is ahead in the arms race depends upon how you keep score.

If you were to answer that question by counting the nuclear warheads possessed by each side, it would be a draw, for the United States and the Soviet Union have roughly equal numbers of warheads (9,000 vs. 8,500). If you were to judge by comparing the explosive power of the two nations' nuclear weapons, the Soviets come out as the clear leader, with an explosive power of some 8,000 megatons (one megaton equals 1 million tons of TNT), which is about twice what American forces contain. In some other areas that are important, such as the accuracy of weapons systems, it is simply not possible to make a meaningful comparison because of the uncertain results of weapon tests.

The respect in which the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union differ the most is delivery systems. Both nations have the capability of delivering nuclear weapons by three different means: land-based missiles, which are considered more accurate and most vulnerable; submarine-launched missiles which, while less accurate are also less vulnerable; and bombers, which are highly accurate but take a long time to get to their targets.

The best estimate is that the Soviets have about three-fourths of their nuclear warheads on land-based missiles; about 20 percent of them in submarines; and less than five percent in bombers.

In contrast, it has been U.S. defense policy for the past two decades to maintain a balanced "triad" of nuclear forces consisting of missiles housed in silos on the land, submarine-based missiles, and strategic bombers. The reason for maintaining this triple threat is to ensure that some will always survive in any attack—and so *deter* any enemy attack: even if two of the legs of that triad are knocked out, the remaining delivery system will be able to deliver a devastating blow. Thus, for example, if the Soviets improved the accuracy and power of their forces to the point where they could knock out U.S. silo-based missiles, disabling one leg of the triad, the U.S. would still be able to use its submarine-launched missiles—many of which are on patrol at any moment and thus invulnerable to attack—and its bombers, which could escape from their airstrips in case of alert.



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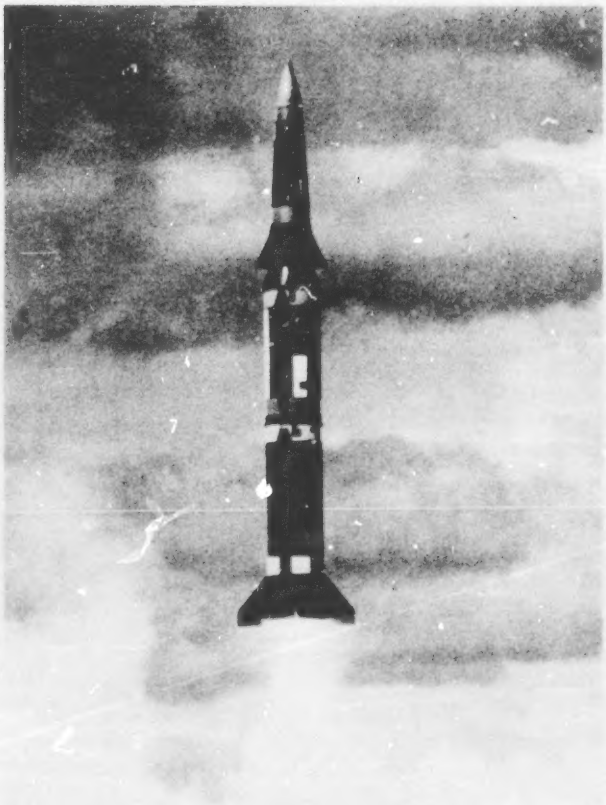
Cruise missiles such as this one are scheduled for deployment in Europe beginning in December, 1983.

The current situation, then, is that the Soviets are superior to the United States in land-based missiles. Until the MX missile is available, their land-based missiles carry more nuclear warheads with greater explosive power than ours. On the other two legs of the triad, however, American forces are superior. American long-range bombers, while aging, are superior to an equally aged Soviet force. Many of our bombers could probably get through to their targets even though Russian anti-aircraft defenses are considered better than our own.

The clearest area of American superiority is our submarine-launched missiles. American submarines are much quieter, and therefore harder to locate and destroy, than their Soviet counterparts; and our antisubmarine warfare capability is far better than theirs. In other words, at least for the time being we have a relatively invulnerable retaliatory force at sea, and they don't. Each one of the 32 American Poseidon submarines carries sixteen missiles, and each of those missiles carries ten warheads. This means that there are 160 nuclear warheads on each submarine, which is impressive. It is all the more impressive when you consider that each of these 160 warheads has a destructive capacity of 50,000 tons of TNT—almost four times the size of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

In summary, while the Soviets have an advantage in land-based intercontinental missiles, American forces are superior in the area of submarine-launched weapons, and a cruise missile program that is further along. As President Carter's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, recently assessed the situation: "The strategic balance between the U.S. and the Soviet Union is one of ambiguous equivalence—in some respects we are ahead and some respects they are."



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A Pershing II missile

THE MX: STRENGTHENING OUR LAND-BASED FORCES

The MX was proposed several years ago in response to a very large, accurate, long-range Soviet missile called the SS-18, which is capable of carrying up to ten nuclear warheads all the way to the U.S. The concern is that since the Soviets already have more than 300 of these, some of them might be used in a devastating strike to knock out our land-based missiles and those we have mounted on submarines that happen to be in port. That would leave us with some 2500 nuclear warheads, mainly in submarines at sea. But since few of those submarine-launched missiles have the necessary accuracy and force to destroy Soviet missiles in their heavily reinforced "silos," the President could be left only with the choice of launching an attack on Russian cities — thus inviting counterattack — or doing nothing. Given such a forbidding choice, the President might choose to do nothing, and to submit to Moscow's demands. That is the "window of vulnerability" that President Reagan voiced concern about. The MX is regarded as a means of closing that "window," by increasing our deterrent ability.

The MX is a large missile some 71 feet long and almost eight feet wide, weighing ninety-six tons, designed to carry ten warheads that can each be aimed at a different target. It has three characteristics which, in combination, make it a formidable weapon: It is a long-range, or intercontinental missile, that can be launched at a great distance from its target. It is both fast and accurate — so accurate that more than half of the warheads aimed at a particular target will fall within a radius of ninety yards of that target. And it has great destructive power: Each warhead has a destructive power equal to 335 kilotons of TNT — which is more than 25 times the destructive power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

REINFORCING THE NUCLEAR UMBRELLA IN EUROPE

The MX is not the only controversial weapons system. Bitter debate and public protest have been provoked by the plan to base somewhat smaller American missiles — the Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missile — in NATO nations late this year. In 1977, when concern first arose in Western Europe about the threat posed by the Soviet SS-20s, the European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization accepted an American promise to install additional nuclear missiles in those countries to reinforce the nuclear "umbrella" that has been an important part of NATO defenses. To reassure Western Europe about the American commitment to our common defense, what was proposed and agreed to was the installation of some 572 additional nuclear warheads in Europe, aimed at the Soviet Union.

Those warheads are to be launched by two kinds of missiles. In December 1983, the first of an eventual 108 ground-launched

Pershing II missiles is scheduled for installation in West Germany. The Pershing II does not have the intercontinental range of the MX, and it carries just a single warhead whose yield is 250 kilotons, or twenty times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb. But it has the advantage of being more accurate than the MX missile, and thus more selective in the damage it is capable of inflicting.

Its advocates regard the Pershing II missile as an important advance in weaponry because of its ability to destroy hardened Soviet command bunkers or missile silos. Critics are concerned that its ability to drop a 250 kiloton warhead within 80 feet of a target some 1000 miles away just ten minutes after firing is sure to alarm the Soviets.

The other missile scheduled for deployment over the coming months in NATO nations is the ground-launched cruise missile. This is essentially a sophisticated version of the V-2 rocket used by Germany in World War II. It is a pilotless aircraft whose range (about 1500 miles) is similar to that of the Pershing II missile, but whose speed (about 450 mph) is far less. It has two chief advantages: First, its computer-controlled guidance system allows it to hug the ground along its flight, thus eluding enemy radar, and allowing for great accuracy. Its second advantage is simply that it is relatively cheap to produce, which makes it suitable for deployment in large numbers, an ideal weapon if your goal is to create a force which the Soviets cannot expect to destroy with a few well-placed missiles.

"STAR WARS" — TAKING THE ARMS RACE INTO SPACE

The basic question about the MX and the Pershing II and cruise missiles is whether they add significantly to the existing "triad" of American nuclear forces — its arsenal of land-based, submarine-based, and bomber-carried weapons. When President Reagan, in a televised address this past March, proposed a major initiative to develop space-age weaponry, he raised some basic questions about the next generation of the arms race, and what might be used to protect the national security in the 1990s and the early decades of the next century. The system he described would consist of an anti-missile "umbrella." To the President, a foolproof system for shooting down nuclear weapons is nothing less than "a new hope for our children in the 21st century."

In one sense, his interest in the defense potential of efforts in space was nothing new. Ever since 1957, when the Soviets launched their Sputnik, space has been a realm of military activity — but of the passive kind. A substantial portion of what is spent for the nation's defense already goes into space efforts. Both the Soviet Union and the United States use satellites for such purposes as early warning against attack, intelligence gathering and long-range communications. The question the President raised was how quickly, and to what extent, we should proceed with some of the other, more explicitly military uses of outer space — including armed space stations, weapons in fixed orbit, and space-based laser and particle beam weapons that can shoot down satellites.

Spending on such projects as military applications of lasers and particle beams has been increasing more rapidly than the rest of the Defense Department's budget. The issue is whether this nation's defense effort should move quickly in that direction for the same reason that we developed the atom bomb — we are able to do so, and perhaps should do it before our enemies do.

On this matter, as with the question of whether we should go ahead with the MX and the Pershing II and cruise missiles, opinion is deeply divided. Critics of the President's plan contend that behind the apparently simple idea of developing space-aged missile defenses lies a swarm of complexities. Questions have been raised both about the huge cost and the feasibility of a plan to build space-based lasers to intercept enemy missiles. The most basic concern is that, far from producing lasting stability, such space initiatives might trigger a new era of the arms race in space.

Questions about whether new missiles will enhance our security or detract from it, and whether it makes sense to continue to modernize our nuclear arsenal and to pursue the arms race into space, reveal the real differences among the partisans of each of the four positions on nuclear defense that we will describe — basic differences about what should be done to enhance the nation's security and to decrease the risk of nuclear war. We will examine the assumptions and concerns of each of these four positions in order to gain a better understanding of how people are thinking about the most important issue of our time.

"Proponents of these four positions have very different perspectives on the question of what weapons this nation needs, and what the consequences would be of choosing not to develop them."

2

ARMS CONTROL: KEEPING THINGS STABLE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS

> "The best way to reduce the risk of nuclear confrontation is to keep the negotiation process going, to prevent anything that is destabilizing and to seek areas of agreement as a way of eventually reducing arms."

In October, 1962, the Soviets attempted to install missiles in Cuba, just ninety miles from the Florida coast. Very concerned by the threat they posed, President Kennedy demanded that they be removed. For a week, the two superpowers were on the very brink of war over that issue. Fortunately, Soviet leaders decided not to call Kennedy's bluff, and the missiles were removed.

The Cuban missile crisis was resolved without hostilities. But it proved that nuclear war was not just a hypothetical possibility. The "unthinkable" might actually happen. Profoundly impressed by the danger that had been so narrowly skirted, leaders of both nations started to think more seriously about how such a situation could be avoided in the future. As President Kennedy put it a few months later, "Today, should total war ever break out, no matter how, our two countries would become the primary targets. All we have built, all we have worked for, would be destroyed in the first twenty-four hours." For all the differences between the Soviet Union and the United States, as President Kennedy pointed out, the desire to avoid future confrontations and their potentially devastating consequences is something the two nations share. He indicated a desire to move away from what was called the "cold war" to a more cooperative relationship, and to take steps to minimize the risk of future confrontations.

Not long after the missile crisis, a "hot line" was installed between Moscow and Washington to prevent misunderstandings in times of emergency. About a year later, a Limited Test Ban Treaty was agreed to which slowed down the arms race by prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons except for underground tests.

THE ARMS CONTROL PERSPECTIVE

The "hot line" and the Limited Test Ban agreement marked a new approach to national security, the "arms control" approach. The missile crisis provides a clear example of what arms controllers are most concerned about preventing. In the twenty years that have passed since then, arms negotiations have helped to pull the superpowers back from the brink.

This approach rests on the conviction that both nations are better off if they can continue talking to each other. The argument goes like this: the Soviets are realists; they will take advantage of weakness, but they also realize that coexistence is in their interest, too. Nuclear weapons are a fact of life. We can't wish them away or simply eliminate them from our plans. If we did, some aggressive power might use its nuclear forces to destroy or dominate us. So we are stuck with nuclear weapons. The best we can do is to try to control them in order to reduce the risk of nuclear war, to decrease its destructiveness should it occur, and to lessen the cost of national defense. Our best hope for minimizing the risk of nuclear confrontation without jeopardizing the national security is to patiently search out areas

of agreement with the Soviets in order to keep a balance between us. Stability is what advocates of this view seek to maintain. And they argue that only a stable balance of nuclear power is likely eventually to make possible any nuclear arms reduction.

As the proponents of this view admit, there are certain practical obstacles to negotiated agreements on arms reductions. The question of how agreements can be verified, for example, has been an impediment in almost every round of negotiations. When nations sign a treaty, they naturally want some guarantee that the other side is going to live up to its part of the bargain. Given the high level of mutual suspicion, reliable verification is a serious problem when on-site inspection is necessary. But by the early 1960s, both the United States and the Soviet Union were using reconnaissance satellites. Because of technological developments in satellite photography, infrared, radar, and other means of detection, it became possible to identify missile silos, bombers on the ground and submarines in port from some distance, and thus to detect missile launchings almost immediately.

Most American officials who have been involved in arms negotiations over the past decade have expressed confidence in the ability of our satellites, radar and listening posts to detect violations before they place us at a significant disadvantage. The small size and mobility of some of the new weapons — such as the cruise missiles launched at sea or from the ground — will, however, create new verification problems. If they are not banned completely, they will be difficult to verify by satellite.

THE HUMAN RACE

Lou Grant. Courtesy *Oakland Tribune*

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

Critics of this way of looking at the problems of a nuclear world point out that twenty years of negotiations have produced only meager results, and certainly no significant reductions in arms. But the arms negotiators point to a series of accomplishments. The "hot line" agreement reached soon after the Cuban missile crisis was not only a step toward avoiding war by miscalculation; it was the beginning of a process of communication between the two chief nuclear adversaries which has weathered some very difficult times.

If negotiations have not held back the arms race, at least certain areas and technologies have been "fenced off" from competition. Treaties passed in 1959 and 1971, for example, prohibited the military use of Antarctica, and the placing of nuclear weapons on the ocean floor. A 1967 agreement banned the use of outer space for military purposes. Other treaties have placed both qualitative and quantitative limits on the weapons that the Soviets and the United States can develop. The most impressive result came with the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks, commonly referred to as the SALT talks. In 1972, Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev signed SALT I, which had two parts. The first set limits on nuclear forces designed for attack.

"If you have two people and they have guns pointed at each other and they can both fire at the same time, somebody has got to start doing some talking."
—29 year old father of 4

ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS

These are some of the agreements that have been reached over the past two decades by U.S. arms negotiators:

★ *The 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty* bans nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.

★ *The 1963 U.S. - Soviet Hot Line Agreement* establishes a direct communications link between the governments of the United States and the USSR for use in time of emergency. A 1971 agreement further improved the communications link.

★ *The 1967 Outer Space Treaty* prohibits the placing of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction around the earth and also outlaws the establishment of military bases, installations and fortifications, the testing of any type of weapons, and the conduct of military maneuvers in outer space.

★ *The 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)* prohibits the transfer of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon states and the acquisition of such weapons by nonnuclear weapon states.

★ *The 1971 Sea-Bed Treaty* prohibits the emplacement of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction on the seabed beyond a twelve-mile zone.

★ *The 1971 U.S. - Soviet Nuclear Accidents Agreement* provides for immediate notification in the event of an accidental or unauthorized incident involving possible detonation of a nuclear weapon.

★ *The 1972 Biological Weapons Convention* prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, or acquisition of biological agents and any weapons designed to use such agents.

★ *The 1972 ABM Treaty* limited the deployment of anti-ballistic missile defenses by the United States and the USSR to two areas — one for the defense of the national capital, and the other for the defense of some ICBMs. A 1974 Protocol further limited both parties to a single area of deployment.

★ *The 1972 Interim Offensive Weapons Agreement* froze the aggregate number of U.S. and Soviet ballistic missile launchers for a five-year period. This agreement expired on October 3, 1977. This agreement and the ABM Treaty are known as SALT I.

★ *The 1972 Agreement of Basic Principles of Relations between the United States and the USSR* provides the basis for relations between the United Staes and the USSR. Both parties agree to do the utmost to avoid military confrontations and to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war.

★ *The 1973 Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War* provides that the United States and the USSR will take all actions necessary to preclude the outbreak of nuclear war.

★ *The 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT)* limits the size of U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons tests to 150 kilotons.

★ *The 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)* contains a provision on confidence-building measures which provides for notification of major military maneuvers in Europe.

★ *The 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty (PNE)* complements the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty by prohibiting any individual underground nuclear explosion for peaceful purposes which has a yield of more than 150 kilotons, or any group explosion with an aggregate yield exceeding 1,500 kilotons.

★ *The 1977 Environmental Modification Convention* prohibits the hostile use of techniques which could produce substantial environmental modificaions.

ON-GOING ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS

★ *The Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START)* These negotiations are the successor talks to SALT. The subject is long-range strategic nuclear weapons (ICBMs, SLBMs, and long-range bombers).

★ *Intermediate Nuclear Force* (INF) These negotiations concern intermediate-range nuclear weapons such as the Soviet SS-20s and the U.S. Pershing II and cruise missiles.

★ *Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction* (MBFR) These talks involve 12 members of NATO and the seven Warsaw Pact members. Negotiators are trying to reduce the number of troops in the Central European area.

Liaison

At the current arms talks in Geneva, negotiators Paul Nitze & Yuri Kvitsinsky shook hands, and then discussed an agreement by which the U.S. would cancel new intermediate-range missiles if the Russians dismantle theirs.

The other restricted further development of anti-ballistic missile systems designed to shoot down incoming warheads. Several years later, in 1979, Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev signed the successor to that agreement, SALT II, which established a ceiling on the total number of strategic nuclear vehicles (including long-range missiles, submarine-launched missiles and those carried by long-range bombers) and even required Soviet reductions of those weapons. The agreement was never ratified, however. In 1980, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter gave up on attempts to get Congress to ratify it, bowing to the view that the treaty would not get the two-thirds vote necessary in the Senate.

The most significant treaties had been agreed to between 1963 and 1972. After that, only SALT II was of comparable importance, and that was not ratified. President Reagan has sent U.S. ambassadors to three major arms control negotiations: the Intermediate Nuclear Force Talks, the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (which is the successor to the SALT talks), and the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks. But there is not much optimism about their eventual success. Many people think that the current climate is not conducive to productive negotiations, that unrealistic hopes for quick results have prompted American negotiators to make unrealistic demands, which virtually guarantees stalemate at the bargaining table.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STABILITY

Those who argue for this approach nonetheless look forward to negotiated agreements eventually on such matters as a comprehensive ban on all tests of nuclear weapons, a moratorium on new nuclear weapons delivery systems, a reduction of nuclear weapons stockpiles, and a mutual declaration not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. They think there is still real hope for negotiated agreements, if talks are pursued seriously and both sides are willing to make reasonable concessions.

But above all, they believe it is important to avoid anything that creates instability between the superpowers, anything that poses an increased threat to either side and gives a clear advantag-

in the arms race to one side or the other. Since nuclear weapons cannot be abolished, our best hope for stability, they argue, is to maintain a situation in which both sides possess sufficient weapons to guarantee that they could not be destroyed in a single crippling attack. As long as each side has the means of mounting a devastating counterattack, the threat of retaliation should be sufficient to deter any nation from considering a first strike. This, in simple form, is the policy of "deterrence," and it has been our nation's policy for decades.

How, then, does this approach see proposals for new weapons systems? Unlike the people who advocate a freeze on the development and deployment of new forces, the arms controllers are not opposed to all new weapons. Some are desirable, as long as they enhance stability and reduce any imbalance between Soviet weapon systems and our own. The paramount objective is not merely to reduce the number of weapons but to lessen the likelihood of anyone starting a nuclear war, either deliberately or by accident. The critical thing is to avoid or remove those weapons that put people on edge by threatening a surprise attack. A basic requirement for stability is that neither side should be so nervous about the need to protect its forces that it would launch its own nuclear weapons in order to avoid losing them to enemy attack.

"The chief concern is to avoid anything that unduly alarms the other side, anything that would lead to greater instability and heighten that likelihood of anyone starting a nuclear war."

That is why many arms controllers oppose the MX missile. They feel that the deployment of the MX would create decreased stability since that weapon — with its power, range, and accuracy — would allow the United States to launch a first strike against Soviet military installations. American leaders have disavowed any intention of launching a first strike. But the Soviets view the MX missile and its potential use differently. They are well aware of the danger of invasion and foreign aggression. Twenty million Soviet citizens died in World War II alone. The Soviets regard the MX as an aggressive weapon that might be used in an attack against them. With it, we would be able to destroy most of their land-based missiles without destroying Soviet cities — and that is what they fear. Accordingly, if the United States goes ahead with the deployment of the MX, the arms controllers feel that it would be destabilizing because it both enables and invites a first strike.

Especially, it increases the possibility of an accidental war. Fearing the power and accuracy of the MX, the Soviets might launch their land-based missiles as soon as they received warning of possible attack. Under those circumstances, a computer malfunction could send out a false warning, leading to the firing of their nuclear missiles in a defensive counterattack — and an accidental war. That is the kind of destabilizing influence that the foes of the MX fear, and that is what they mean when they say — as Senator Moynihan did this past summer in debates over the MX — that deploying this new weapon amounts to announcing the policy that "our finger is on the trigger."

The proponents of arms control and a stable balance of weapons also believe that the high cost of the MX is not justified by any of its proponents' claims. Far from being the "invulnerable" weapon that was originally intended, it will be at least as vulnerable to attack as the weapons it replaces — because it will sit in the same relatively fragile silos — and a more attractive target because it offers the enemy the possibility of knocking out ten warheads with just one or two of their own.

As proposed by the Carter administration, MX missiles would have been moved randomly around the deserts of Utah and Nevada. That system would have been less vulnerable, therefore less destabilizing, and arms controllers accepted it as part of a compromise to gain ratification of the SALT II treaty. There were, however, so many objections to that basing plan from people in Utah and Nevada that the plan was rejected.

But the deployment of the MX in fixed silos would violate the SALT II treaty, which up to now has been observed but not ratified. Although proponents of the MX regard it as a valuable "bargaining chip" that we might give up in exchange for major Soviet concessions, its value in this respect is questioned too. Our nuclear arsenal is filled with "bargaining chips" that were never bargained away. So arms controllers regard the MX as a destabilizing and therefore undesirable weapon, one that we shouldn't even consider deploying.

MacNelly. Courtesy Tribune Co. Syndicate

"The question of how arms control agreements can be verified has been a difficult issue in every round of negotiations."

COUNTERBALANCING THE SOVIET THREAT IN EUROPE

The smaller missiles scheduled for deployment in Europe beginning this December pose a somewhat different set of considerations. If you are among those who care about arms control and the NATO alliance, then you will be concerned about doing something to balance the threat which Europeans see in the build-up of Soviet SS-20 missiles targeted against Western Europe. Something needs to be done to offset this threat without upsetting the strategic balance, but what? Although the two missiles that will be deployed in Europe — the Pershing II and the cruise missile — are normally referred to in tandem, arms controllers make a sharp distinction between them. And the distinction is illuminating to anyone who wants to come seriously to grips with the complexities of the nuclear defense issue.

The Pershing II missile shows some of the same problems that lead to opposing the MX. It is destabilizing because it is fast, accurate and capable of knocking out reinforced Soviet targets. When placed on their launching sites in Germany, the Pershing missiles will be capable of reaching Moscow in just ten mintues. The Soviets regard these missiles as an immediate threat to their security, much as we regarded the missiles that were to be placed in Cuba in 1962. Because of the fear that the Pershing II missile causes for the Soviets, the arms controllers oppose it.

Their assessment of the cruise missile is somewhat different. Although its range is similar to that of the Pershing II and it is highly accurate, cruise missiles are much slower. If launched from the regions of West Germany that are closest to the Soviet Union, the cruise missile would take about an hour to get to the nearest Soviet target — some six times longer than the Pershing II missiles require. So the cruise missile is not so threatening as a weapon that might be used in a surprise attack (a "first-strike" weapon). Furthermore, since cruise missiles are small, mobile, and widely dispersed, they could not easily be the targets for a surprise attack by the Soviets. From the arms controllers' point of view, this is a far more appealing weapon than either the Pershing II missile or the MX.

If we need a new weapon to counter the threat of the Soviet SS-20s, this is it. This small missile is not particularly useful for a surprise first attack and it is "stable," which is to say that it is not vulnerable to first attack. Proponents believe that if we shifted away from intercontinental missiles such as the MX, toward cruise missiles, both sides could relax somewhat and the nuclear balance might be stabilized.

But cruise missiles, which offer certain short-term advantages, may over the long run pose real problems for arms control. Because they are small and portable, they are easy to hide. Unlike bombers and ballistic-missile launchers, which can be readily counted and kept track of by various means, the cruise missiles are difficult to monitor. Since they can be fired from a variety of platforms, and equipped with either conventional or nuclear warheads, it is difficult for the other side to verify the location and number of them in order to detect treaty violations. But since cruise missiles in Europe promise greater stability, at least for a while, most arms controllers favor them.

THE MIDDLE GROUND

This approach to arms control occupies a middle ground in the debate over how to reduce the nuclear risk without jeopardizing the nation's security. Over the past few years, this position has been attacked both by people who favor a freeze and by people who believe that our best hope is an arms build-up.

Arms controllers respond to the advocates of a nuclear freeze by insisting that certain new weapons are valuable, even indispensable, in achieving the eventual goal of reducing the risk of nuclear confrontation. They regard the opponents of cruise missiles in Europe as well-intentioned but unrealistic. The best hope for achieving arms reductions, they argue, is to bargain away the Pershing II's and to deploy cruise missiles to balance a reduced number of Soviet SS-20's.

To their more "hawkish" critics who argue that peace lies in strength, the arms controllers reply that it's not realistic to think that we could establish a lasting advantage in the arms race. In fact, it's undesirable even to try to gain the upper hand in the arms race since that would be destabilizing.

"Arms control is not the answer to the perilous competition betwen the United States and the Soviet Union and the security problems posed for both. But without it, there are no answers."
—Leslie Gelb

Their fundamental belief is that the slow, step-by-step process of negotiated agreements offers the best prospect of achieving the eventual goal of reducing the present danger. Our political and diplomatic skills offer the best hope of pulling us back from the brink. We must abandon the unrealistic hope of grand or sudden solutions; but by continuing the negotiations process, we can make progress toward such goals as achieving reductions in the number of nuclear arms and each side's ability to launch surprise attacks. Such negotiations will be successful only if we assure the Soviets as much security as we seek for ourselves, and we simply have to try harder to coexist with the Russians. As Leslie Gelb, a national security correspondent for the *New York Times* and a former U.S. arms negotiator writes, "Arms control is not the answer to the perilous competition between the United States and the Soviet Union and the security problems posed for both. But without it, there are no answers."

But as reasonable as this approach sounds, there are many who strenuously disagree. The advocates of peace-through-strength take particular exception to the arms controllers' insistence upon maintaining the negotiating process and reaching agreements. In their view, the arms control establishment has been obsessed with trying to reach agreements, whether or not they bolster American security. In fact, they argue, the main effect of the SALT treaties was to permit the Soviets to move ahead with a massive build-up of their forces. As a result, they have not only caught up with us, they have moved ahead. Thus we must pursue quite a different course from the one advocated by the arms controllers. And that course is one which we will examine now.

3

PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH: IF YOU WANT PEACE, PREPARE FOR WAR

In September, 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain met Adolph Hitler outside of Munich to discuss the future of Czechoslovakia, which Hitler wanted to control. Fearing that by opposing Hitler he might risk war, Chamberlain chose to appease him. He returned to England announcing that this policy would bring "peace in our time." But Chamberlain's optimism was not justified. On September 1, 1939, Germany attacked Poland and the most devastating war in human history began.

Many people believe that the Munich agreement and Chamberlain's policy of appeasement were among the chief causes of that war, and that if Great Britain and the other European nations had opposed Hitler in Czechoslovakia war might have been averted.

THE MUNICH ANALOGY

For the people who believe that the best hope for maintaining the peace in the 1980s is to shore up our military might, what happened in Munich 45 years ago provides a clear lesson of what we must strive to avoid. This past winter, when the U.S. Senate debated the matter of who should head the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, conservative senators reminded their colleagues on several occasions of the cost of Europe's willful refusal to face the truth about Hitler. At one point, Senator John Tower rose, bristling with indignation at a comment to the effect that we should try to appease the Soviets through negotiations and mutual concessions. Within six years of Chamberlain's

> **"Military weakness leads to war. Faced with the Soviet threat, the only way to assure the peace is to maintain enough military might to deter attack and to prevent intimidation."**

Drawing by Lorenz; © 1981 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

"As I see it, our commitment to the peace process is only credible if our commitment to the war process is credible."

Judge © 1979. Courtesy *San Diego Union*

"Simple-minded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly. It means the betrayal of our past, the squandering of our freedom. The reality is that we must find peace through strength."
—President Ronald Reagan

declaration of "peace in our time," Tower pointed out, some fifty million people were killed on the battlefield or in extermination camps. As Senator Jake Garn later commented, "We can find lots of other examples of the Neville Chamberlains, the appeasers of this world who never seem to learn the lessons of history."

That was President Reagan's point in a speech delivered this past March in Orlando, Florida, in which he urged the Protestant church leaders who were assembled there not to ignore "the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire." In President Reagan's words, "simple-minded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly. It means the betrayal of our past, the squandering of our freedom. The reality is that we must find peace through strength."

To those who advocate peace through strength, the Soviets are not only — as the President put it in that speech in Orlando — "the focus of evil in the modern world," they are also intent upon expanding their influence and power. What has happened over the past few years in Afghanistan and Poland is what will happen again and again unless other countries are powerful enough to stop it.

It is both misleading and dangerous to underestimate the strength of the Soviets, or to make benign assumptions about their motives. It is short-sighted and self-defeating to underestimate the Soviets, and to assume good faith or good motives on their part. In World War II, we were saved from Nazi domination by just one thing. Because the war developed slowly, it allowed us time to build up our military might, and eventually to prevail. Should another war break out, we wouldn't have the luxury of time to prepare for it. That is why it is so important to have military superiority. The words of an old Roman maxim describe the most prudent path today: "If you want peace, prepare for war."

THE "WINDOW OF VULNERABILITY"

In the first two decades of the nuclear era, America had unquestioned nuclear superiority, and that was the source of our security. The threat of retaliation was credible as long as the Soviet Union could not reply in kind. But in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, the Soviets undertook a massive arms buildup. By about 1970, the effects of that buildup were apparent. The Soviets had developed some 300 submarine-launched missiles. That's still less than half the size of the American missile launching fleet, but nonetheless an impressive achievement in a few years. And if they remained behind in submarine-launched missiles, the Soviets had by 1970 an arsenal of long-range land-based missiles that was about equal to our own. Over the next few years, they duplicated our feat of putting multiple warheads on those missiles. By the late 1970s, reconnaissance showed that the Soviets had made a dramatic breakthrough in the accuracy of their heavy missile, the SS-18. With that missile, they had a weapon big enough to carry at least ten warheads, and one that was highly accurate as well — which meant that they might soon be able to destroy most of the U.S. missiles that are based in silos.

The Russians have been outspending us on nuclear weapons for almost twenty years. As a result, the destructive power of their arsenal is now almost twice as great as that of the United States. There is no indication that they intend to stop. The greatest concern of those who favor an American arms buildup is that we have not only lost the lead in the arms race, we have fallen behind. Because of their greater strength in certain areas — particularly land-based missiles — the Soviets are now capable of threatening U.S. land-based missiles. Their missiles have enough nuclear warheads to destroy our land-based missiles, while still keeping a reserve force to destroy other targets.

That threat is what people are referring to when they talk about the "window of vulnerability." The fear is that until at least the late 1980s when the MX — if it is deployed — is expected to be available in significant numbers, the United States will not be able to offer the threat of a comparable counterattack. If our land-based missiles were knocked out by enemy attack, we would still have the option of using submarine-launched missiles in a counterattack. But since those missiles are not as accurate as those fired from land, we would not be able to destroy the remaining Soviet missiles. We could use those submarine-launched missiles to devastate Soviet cities, of course; but by doing so we would be inviting the Soviets to do the same thing to American cities. So an American president would be left with the choice of either unleashing unimaginable slaughter or giving in to Soviet demands, a form of nuclear blackmail.

That is the nightmare that the advocates of peace-through-strength set out to avoid by building up our nuclear arsenal. In the words of a recent statement issued by the Committee on the Present Danger: "Our country is in a period of danger, and the danger is increasing. Unless decisive steps are taken to alert the nation, and to change the course of its policy, our economic and military capacity will be inadequate to assure peace with security."

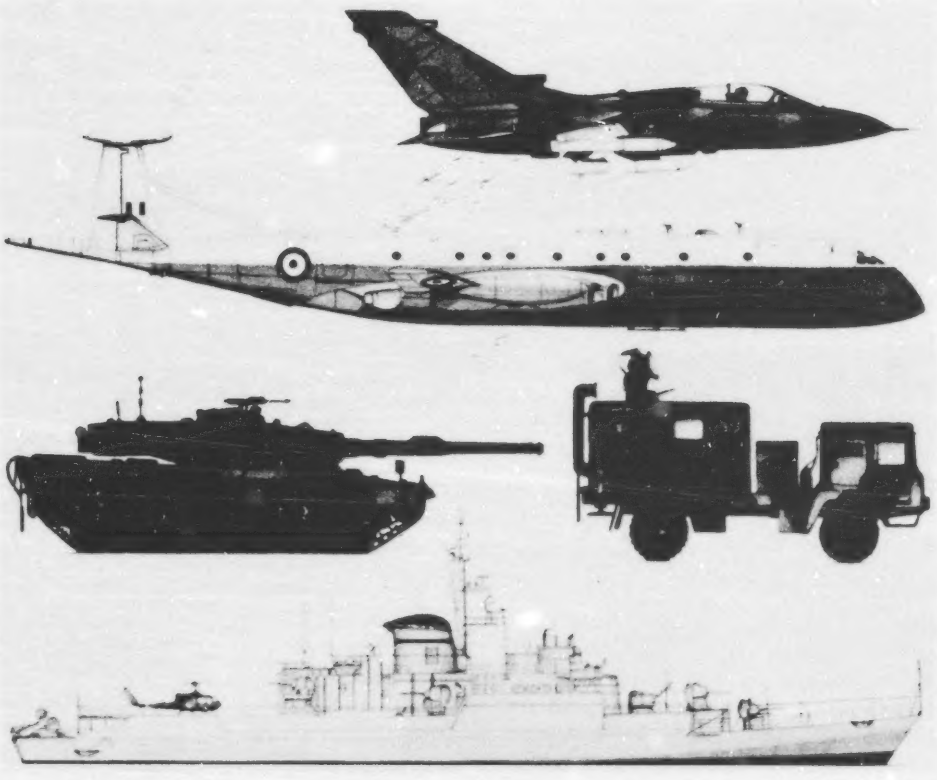
REQUIREMENTS OF DETERRENCE

What needs to be done to close that "window of vulnerability" and to prevent that nightmare from ever happening? The proponents of an arms buildup answer that we need weapons that offer a credible and reliable deterrent to aggression. Deterrence is defined as the capability of keeping someone from doing something through fear or anxiety. That's what parents have in mind when they tell their children, "Don't go out in the street or I'll spank you." Similarly, the President in effect tells Soviet leaders, "Don't attack us — because if you do, there will be devastating consequences." As former Secretary of State Alexander Haig put it, "At the heart of deterrence strategy is the requirement that the risk of engaging in war must be made to outweigh any possible benefits of aggression."

Deterrence defines the purpose of the military not as fighting to win wars but being impressive enough to keep them from happening. What deterrence requires is a military strength that cannot be overcome by surprise attack or sudden technological breakthrough. One of its fundamental rules, which has served as a guideline for weapons systems ever since the second world war, is that the object of a strategic defense system is to deter, and to deter safely it must be able to survive a first attack.

If that is our overriding consideration, which weapons do we need to develop? Advocates of peace-through-strength believe that we must maintain strong conventional forces as well as nuclear weapons and that we will have a reliable deterrent capability only if each of the three legs of our defense triad — land-based missiles, submarine-launched missiles, and bombers — is as good or better than what the Soviets have. Far from being convinced that it is dangerous and destabilizing for us to

"At the heart of deterrence strategy is the requirement that the risk of engaging in war must be made to outweigh any possible benefits of aggression."
—Alexander Haig



Courtesy of Control Data Corporation

Advocates of peace through strength believe that we must maintain strong conventional forces as well as nuclear weapons.

achieve a clear advantage in the arms race — the view presented in the last chapter — it is just that advantage that the advocates of peace-through-strength think we should regain and try to maintain.

Accordingly, they are strong advocates of the MX. Over the next few years the accuracy of submarine-launched missiles will improve, perhaps to the point where they have the ability to hit and destroy hardened targets such as missile silos and reinforced command and control centers. That will help to close the "window of vulnerability." And a large number of accurate missiles, each with a single warhead, widely dispersed and protected around the U.S, will keep us from the danger of being completely "taken out" by surprise attack. But meanwhile, the single biggest step we could take to prevent nuclear blackmail would be to develop and deploy the MX missile. Proponents of this position argue that its very size and power make it an effective deterrent.

For that reason, it is argued, the MX represents our best "bargaining chip" in future arms negotiations. But at the same time, we should understand that this point of view is one that sees superior strength, not negotiation, as the best means to avoid nuclear war. It starts with the assumption that the other side is by definition hostile and not to be trusted. And — like any army at the point of victory — it sees negotiations as possible only when we have proven invulnerability. And for that reason it seems important to put weapons that can match the Soviets in Europe too.

Because nuclear conflict takes place so quickly, we wouldn't have the luxury of time to come to the defense of our European allies after they were attacked, as we did in 1941. So American power must be engaged in the defense of Europe at the outset of any confrontation. More than thirty years ago, we made the decision to rely on nuclear weapons rather then conventional forces — partly because of our obvious superiority at that time, and partly because it is much cheaper to build nuclear weapons than to maintain a powerful modern army. And now, if the United States does not constantly strengthen its nuclear forces in Europe, either deterrence will be weakened, or the United States and its NATO allies will be forced to spend a great deal more to build up their conventional forces. So the deployment of these new missiles is in the best interest of both the United States and the other NATO countries.

For those who believe it is essential to maintain strong military force, the cruise missiles are a particularly good investment in our security because, once they are deployed in Europe, there will be so many of them, scattered in so many different locations, that it would be virtually impossible for the Soviets to destroy them.

Now advocates of peace-through-strength are inevitably also going to insist that because the cost of falling behind in

the space race would be so great, we have to go ahead with the development of new military technologies in space. For years the Soviets have pursued a vigorous and methodical program to exploit space for military purposes, and they may well be ahead of us in doing so. According to the Defense Department, the USSR has for the past ten years been launching more than 75 spacecraft per year — which is about five times the rate of U.S. launchings. The payload that they are able to place in orbit is estimated to be about ten times greater than the United States space program has achieved. That effort reflects the importance that the Soviets attach to the space program. It is expected that they will be able to orbit space stations by 1990. Soon after that, they might well be able to launch a space-based laser anti-satellite system. With these developments in mind, advocates of defensive strength feel that we have to move ahead quickly to develop space-aged weaponry, no matter how much it costs. The alternative of conceding the "high frontier" to our enemies is simply unthinkable, because it would amount to handing the Soviets the advantage in the arms race.

THE REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE: ARM TO DISARM

Those who advocate the peace-through-strength position clearly see in the Soviet government the kind of threat that Nazi Germany posed in the 1930s. And faced with the threat of an evil and expansionist power, the only way to assure the peace is to maintain our military might in order to deter attack and prevent intimidation. For them, the real question is whether the American people are willing to face the uncomfortable truth about the Soviets, and whether we are prepared to take a realistic path to provide for the nation's security.

They are adamant about two basic points. The first is that the Soviets only understand strength, and the only way to ensure this nation's security, therefore, is to do what is necessary to get and keep a position of unmistakable military superiority. Given the nature of our adversary, we have to accept that the best way of preventing war is to prepare for it.

The other premise is that the Soviets will never negotiate seriously as long as they are ahead in the arms race. So our best hope for achieving arms reductions is first to arm. First we must regain a position of military superiority. Then the Soviets may be convinced that it is in their interest to negotiate seriously to reduce arms.

To many others, those who favor a military buildup appear more interested in winning the arms race than in curtailing it. But supporters of a buildup regard their perspective as the only realistic approach, the one that is most likely to achieve the ultimate objective of reducing the nuclear risk without jeopardizing national security. They point out that arms controllers have been singularly unsuccessful at the very task they aim to achieve — they haven't reduced nuclear arms. That's not very likely to happen, they insist, until an arms buildup

"Conceding the 'high frontier' to our enemies is simply unthinkable, because it would amount to handing the Soviets the advantage in the arms race."

gives us the upper hand. The strategy of deterrence has kept the peace for over thirty years, they argue, and it is still our best hope for maintaining the peace and eventually reducing the danger of Soviet aggression and nuclear confrontation. A nuclear freeze would only reward the Soviets for the massive military buildup they have undertaken over the past decade, and penalize the United States for a decade of restraint. It would remove the Soviet incentive to engage in meaningful arms control negotiations, and it would preserve a situation in which the Soviets have the upper hand because of their lead in land-based missiles.

Critics reply that this scenario of nuclear blackmail and Soviet intimidation is, in the words of Paul Warnke, a leading negotiator for the SALT II treaty, "inherently implausible." They insist that the Kremlin would not launch its missiles first, because they could never be sure of their ability to destroy most of the land-based American missiles — and they wouldn't run the ultimate risk of tempting the United States to reply with a devastating strike on Soviet cities.

Others challenge this same approach on moral grounds. This past spring, a group of Roman Catholic bishops questioned the morality of deterrence, and the implications of a policy that threatens our enemies with the prospect of wholesale destruction not just of military targets but of entire cities and the people who inhabit them.

Most of the defenders of deterrence through strength feel that it can be defended on the grounds that it alone will preserve the values that are most important to most Americans. "By sustaining deterrence," as former Secretary of State Alexander Haig put it, "we protect the essential values of western civilization — democratic government, personal liberty, and religious freedom — and preserve the peace. In failing to maintain deterrence, we would risk our freedom while actually increasing the likelihood of also suffering nuclear devastation." Nonetheless, opposition to that view has been growing over the past two years. More and more people appear to see it as a serious misreading of Soviet intentions, and a basic misunderstanding about the chief danger which faces us today. In their view, "arming in order to disarm" is not only self-contradictory, it is self-defeating. Far from enhancing the nation's security by pursuing a military build-up, what we have been doing by constantly modernizing our nuclear forces is raising to an ever more dangerous level the "balance of terror" that Winston Churchill and Dwight Eisenhower foresaw thirty years ago. We have been making more and more elaborate preparations for a war that most people consider unwinnable. With every step in the arms race, our peril increases. What we have to do now, they say, is not to move forward with an arms race that gets us nowhere, but agree to stop. That is the position to which we now turn.

"The real question is whether the American people are willing to face the uncomfortable truth about the Soviets, and whether we are prepared to take a realistic path to provide for the nation's security."

4

FREEZING THE ARMS RACE: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

From the beginning, what is now called the freeze movement was a grassroots affair, conceived and supported not by experts or policymakers but by ordinary citizens concerned that the arms race is simply out of control. By the spring of 1982, the idea of declaring a halt by agreeing upon a bilateral freeze on the development and deployment of any further nuclear weapons was being discussed in communities around the country. In Vermont, there were town meetings at which resolutions to this effect were passed. In California, hundreds of thousands of people signed petitions calling for a referendum on whether the President should be advised to seek a nuclear freeze.

On June 12, 1982, this fledgling movement came of age when 750,000 people packed New York City's Central Park to demonstrate their concern and their support for the freeze. It was a demonstration that drew people from all over the country, and from various parts of the political spectrum. The speakers who addressed that crowd advocated a variety of freeze proposals, as various as the posters that waved in the crowd. But however vague their details, however varied their language, there was a common concern and a single message: enough is enough.

> "To continue the arms race is unnecessary, unaffordable, and dangerous. Our best hope is to stop the arms race now by agreeing to a bilateral freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons."

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THE LOGIC OF A FREEZE

The idea reflects the impatience that so many people feel about the arms race. The arms controllers say they want restraint but they have not been able to stem the tide. Advocates of a nuclear defense build-up say their goal is to reduce the risk and preserve our security, but they have supported a massive increase in the number of weapons that threaten us and all the world. Freeze proponents believe that we are now in a paradoxical situation where more military expenditures make us less secure. By spending increasing amounts on increasingly sophisticated weapons we simply accelerate the arms race, and preserve the nuclear stalemate at a higher level of risk. Advocates of a freeze believe that rather than running faster, or conducting further negotiations over the rules for the next lap, the United States and the Soviet Union should simply stop where they are now — no more new nuclear weapons on either side, period.

From the point of view of those who back a freeze, it is wasteful, futile, and dangerous to continue to pursue the arms race in the illusory hope of achieving a lasting advantage. That is what we have been trying to do since the beginning of the age of nuclear weapons. We have tried to outfox the Soviets with new military technologies; we have tried to overwhelm them with the sheer number of weapons in our arsenal; we have tried to discourage them by spending a great deal on the arms race. None of it has worked. In the words of Senator Edward Kennedy, "Recent history demonstrates that the Soviets are prepared to do whatever it takes to match us in every stage of the nuclear arms race — step by step, warhead by warhead, missile by missile." And of course, proponents point out, we are doing exactly the same thing to them (as the preceeding chapter illustrated).

"Like building blocks stacked one upon the other in a child's playroom, the nuclear weapons buildup has lifted all of us to higher and higher levels of danger. Inexorably, we are moving toward the point where the slightest accident or miscalculation could bring the whole structure tumbling down, and plunge our two nations and the world into nuclear holocaust."
—Senator Edward Kennedy

First we developed the atomic bomb and used it in 1945; four years later, the USSR conducted its first atomic test. We developed an intercontinental bomber by 1948; the Soviets had one by 1955. The USSR flight-tested the first intercontinental land-based missile designed to carry nuclear warheads in 1957; we did the same a year later. They placed a satellite in orbit in 1957; we followed with our own satellite a few months later. The United States pioneered in submarine launching of missiles in 1960; the Russians had comparable subs within a decade. We developed multiple warheads, which increase the number of targets a missile can hit, by 1966; the USSR had them two years later. By 1970, we had further developed multiple warheads that enable one missile to hit as many as ten different targets as far apart as 100 miles; Russia matched our capacity to do this by 1975. With the production of long-range cruise missiles in 1982, we announced a new generation of missiles; the Russians are reportedly several years behind us in this technology but are expected to have a similar weapon by the late 1980s. Like a chess game between two formidable opponents, the arms race

progresses step by step, as each side moves to cancel its opponent's advantage.

To the people who advocate a freeze, the greatest danger in that competition between the United States and the Soviet Union is not the threat of Soviet attack, but the arms race itself. The arms race has gathered so much momentum that it has become uncontrollable. Even if that race were stopped today, the sheer number of nuclear explosives poses a dangerous menace to mankind.

THE ILLUSION OF "SUPERIORITY"

Far from agreeing with the advocates of an arms buildup that our chief objective should be to seek superiority, people who want to halt the arms race believe that both sides already have far more weapons than they could ever use. Yet if either of the two approaches we have already described — negotiated stability and superior strength — has its way, there will be even more of these weapons ten years from now.

Many advocates of a halt regard the arms control approach as deeply flawed, as dangerous in its own way as the path taken by those who unabashedly advocate an arms buildup. New military technologies have been developing faster than the negotiators can control them. Since arms control talks have often developed into contests to see how much of an advantage each side can contrive to keep, the very process encourages the assumption that "superiority" in the nuclear arms race is a meaningful concept.

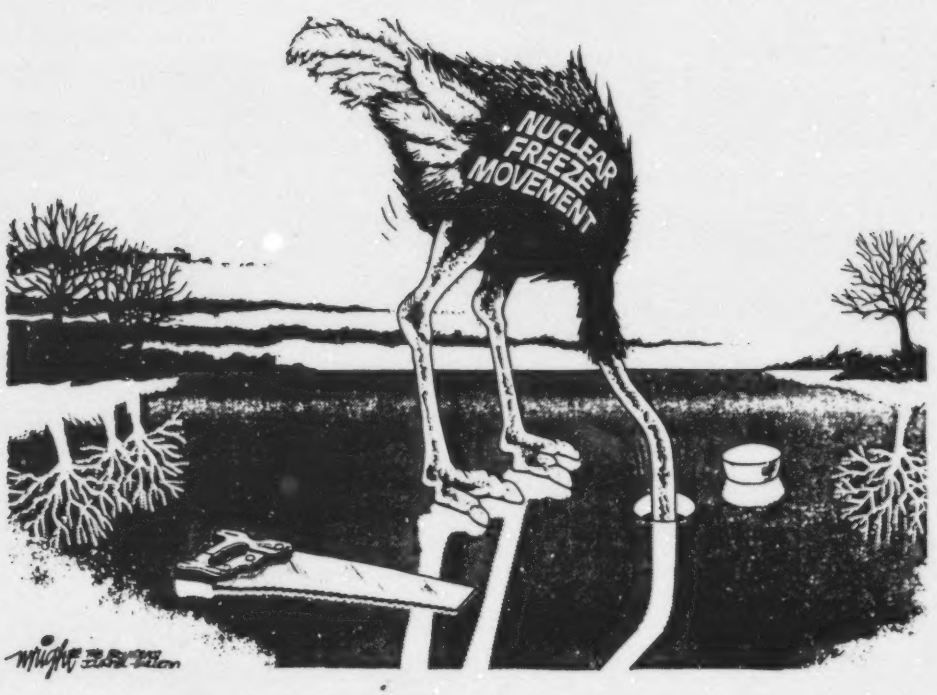
Those who advocate a third point of view are not discarding the idea of deterrence. But they do argue that the idea of "relative advantage" in the arms race is an illusion. By way of example, let us assume the worst: that the Soviets launch a surprise attack that knocks out our entire arsenal of 1,052 land-based missiles. Let us assume further that the attack destroys all of our bombers, some 400 of them, and the 16 submarines that are in port. What would we have left with which to launch a counterattack (what the professionals call a "second strike")? We would still have 16 submarines, equipped with over 3,000 nuclear warheads. Just one of our Poseidon submarines equipped with 160 50-kiloton warheads could destroy every large and medium-sized city in the Soviet Union.

The 16 remaining submarines would have more than enough warheads to devastate the Soviet Union. "In the event of a Soviet first strike," as Senator Kennedy has put it, "the United States would still have at least 3500 warheads with which to retaliate, enough to make Soviet rubble bounce from Moscow to Vladivostok." And that, to those who want to call a halt to the deployment of new weapons, is all the deterrent capability we need.

Accordingly, many advocates of a freeze regard any further weapons proposals — whether for the MX, the Pershing II or cruise missiles scheduled for installation in Europe, or for new military technologies in outer space — as an example of the problem, not a step toward its solution. They are not concerned with distinguishing "offensive" from "defensive" weapons, and supporting weapons which enhance stability while opposing those which do not. They don't think that any of the new weapons are necessary. NATO nations don't need 572 new weapons in Europe to hold the Soviet Union "at risk." That is something that can be done just as well by the nuclear forces already on hand there, notably the Poseidon submarines assigned to NATO, which weren't designed for war fighting but are quite sufficient for deterrence.

Doug Marlette, © *Charlotte Observer*

"I'm not stopping until I catch up with him!"



Richard Wright. Courtesy Scripps-Howard Syndicate

Critics of the freeze feel that it is unrealistic and naive.

THE PERIL OF ACCIDENTAL WAR

What is most to be feared, from the point of view of those who argue for a freeze, is the very proliferation of weapons that this new deployment in Europe would represent. Think of what the deployment of several hundred ground-launched cruise missiles would mean. Arms negotiators — as we have seen — regard these as "defensive" weapons whose chief virtue is that they are "survivable": it would be very hard for the Soviets to knock them out in a first, sudden strike because they are small, portable, easily hidden and widely dispersed. Yet from our point of view in this chapter, it is just those traits that make the cruise missiles so dangerous. If we proceed with their deployment, they will be scattered all over Europe, and will multiply the chance of error, accident, sabotage, and escape into other hands.

In the 1950s, the Pentagon authorized the production of various small nuclear weapons for battlefield use. These weapons were regarded as "big brothers" to conventional arms, as perfectly "normal" weapons that promise more bang for the buck. For a while, the Pentagon deployed an atomic bazooka called the Davy Crockett that could be carried on an infantryman's shoulder. That weapon was soon recalled because of fears about controlling its use. And that is what concerns the advocates of the freeze about the cruise missiles. The very fact that there are so many of them and that they are relatively small may tempt us to think of them as "normal weapons." They are not. Their proliferation is greatly to be feared.

The Pershing missiles pose a somewhat different threat. Since they confront Soviet leaders with the threat of a ten-minute attack, it is expected that Soviet leaders will respond to their installation by putting their counterattack weapons on automatic instructions — known as "launch on attack." That means that they will instruct their computers to launch a counterattack as soon as radar picks up an incoming blip. The more knockout weapons that are aimed at Soviet targets, the more likely it is that they will be prepared for immediate counter-attack. That raises the ominous threat of war by miscalculation or mistake. There have been computer errors in our command and control centers for years. This development, known as "launch on attack," provides an even more sensitive tripwire, and allows both sides less room for correctable error. So it is crucially important to stop the proliferation of weapons.

A GOOD TIME TO STOP

Advocates of this position believe that a freeze is the best course for two reasons. First, they believe that both sides already have enough to survive a first strike and retaliate — thus already they are deterring any potential adversary. And second, they believe that the greater the arsenal, the greater the risk of its being used — even accidentally.

But critics believe that we can't simply halt the arms race. If you are persuaded that we are locked in a deadly chess game with an implacable and untrustworthy enemy, then we can't

risk renouncing the development of new weapons. Especially we can't risk it at the very time when our enemy has more and newer weapons in the field then we do. An immediate halt to new weapons production would be dangerous because it would preserve the current imbalance between Soviet forces and our own. It would lock us into existing weapons systems, which in many cases are obsolete and in need of modernization. Because of the rapid Soviet buildup in recent years, most of their delivery systems are quite modern. But many of ours are at least 15 years old. If their equipment is better than ours, a freeze might lock us into a position of weakness.

If, on the other hand, you believe we and our opponent are both reluctant players in a chess game that neither of us can risk losing, then you'll be very worried about the precise moment at which you suggest to your opponent that you both call it quits. You are not so much concerned about the number of weapons available as the kind of weapons — and the temptation they might present to one side rather than the other. You care about stability — and you are probably opposed to freezing the arms race now. A freeze could pull the rug out from under current negotiations. It is important, you'll point out, to consider the significance of when you propose to stop the arms race. A freeze in 1959, for example, would have stopped deployment of our Polaris submarine-based missiles, and that would have made the 1960s less stable than they were.

While not denying that the Russians' weapons may be superior to our own in some respects, advocates of a freeze regard the current situation as one in which both sides are roughly equal. If we wait until both sides have precisely equal forces, we'll never get around to stopping the arms race. So this is as good a time as any, and better than most, to decide to stop further weapons production as a first step toward an eventual reduction in arms. More importantly, the USSR has at least as much to gain from a freeze as we do. The Soviet Union has been able to build up an impressive military machine only at great cost to the domestic economy, and it is beset with problems. The USSR lags far behind western countries in economic development. There is considerable pressure to improve agricultural production and to accelerate the production of consumer goods — neither of which can be done very well as long as so many resources are being diverted into the military. So the Soviets, advocates argue, may well agree to a freeze.

A MUTUAL, VERIFIABLE FREEZE

But the point of a freeze, in most people's eyes, is that it stop entirely any further development or production of new weapons systems on both sides. It is to be a mutual freeze. And advocates concede that this raises some very complicated issues about what is to be frozen and — most of all — how it can be verified to prevent either side from cheating. It will require devising and negotiating verification procedures for the development, testing, and deployment of about a hundred different weapons and delivery systems. It means too that agreement must be reached on countermeasures — such as antisubmarine technologies — that either side might undertake to defend itself against existing weapons. Will replacements of existing systems be allowed? If so, can they be an improved version of existing weapons and delivery systems? SALT II, which was essentially a partial-freeze agreement, took seven years to negotiate. A complete halt to weapons development and production could take even longer. A freeze has the virtue of being easily understood. But it will be no easy matter to arrive at a truly bilateral, verifiable freeze.

It may be true, as former Deputy Director of the CIA Herbert Scoville points out, that a total freeze could be more easily verified than the specific restrictions placed on certain weapons by the SALT agreements. In a total freeze, any testing, production or deployment would be a violation. Still, there is reason for concern that a freeze might favor the Soviets because their violations would be far harder to detect than our own. Through congressional hearings about the defense budget, intensive media coverage, even leaks from Pentagon officials, the American public knows quite a bit about which weapons

"Developing and deploying new weapons systems such as the MX and the Pershing II and cruise missiles is simply another futile round in the arms race that we have been pursuing for a generation."

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are being produced. It is likely that any American violation of an agreement would be widely publicized. But that is not the case in the Soviet Union, where a premium is placed upon secrecy. Advocates of a freeze agree with the arms controllers that through the use of spy satellites and electronic monitoring blatant violations can be detected, and that is all that is required for satisfactory verification. But critics of a freeze contend that the Soviet Union might cheat, and use the cloak of a freeze agreement as a means of attaining the upper hand.

THE "DOVE'S DILEMMA"

Those who propose an immediate halt to the further development and production of nuclear weapons have a distinctive perspective on how to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons without jeopardizing the nation's security. They regard further escalation of the arms race as unnecessary and dangerous. They feel strongly that developing and deploying new weapons systems such as the MX and the Pershing II and cruise missiles is simply another futile round in the arms race that we have been pursuing for a generation. They believe that the nation's best hope is an immediate and verifiable bilateral freeze.

This past fall, freeze proposals were on the ballot in nine states, the District of Columbia, and 29 cities and counties. Of those 39 contests, the freeze lost only in Arizona and in two counties in Arkansas and western Colorado. This spring, Congress adopted a proposal calling for a "mutual and verifiable freeze and reductions in nuclear weapons" by the United States and the Soviet Union — although speaking only of objectives without specifying how they would be achieved. That resolution constitutes a moral commitment to the goal rather than a binding agreement.

Still, besides the many defense experts who are concerned about what the freeze would do to America's deterrent ability, people from another direction have criticized it too.

Many people are initially attracted to the freeze because it seems to promise reduced expenditures for the military. At a time when our annual defense bill runs $200 billion, many Americans are understandably eager to find some way of reducing the cost of providing for the nation's security. Yet a freeze wouldn't necessarily reduce the overall cost of America's defense program.

"The concept of security encompasses more than simply military force... and a society can reach a point at which additional military expenditure no longer provides additional security."
—Robert S. McNamara

If you think about our ability to defend the NATO allies, you begin to understand why. One of the reasons why a nuclear "umbrella" was first installed in Europe was that it offers a low-cost alternative to conventional arms. Many people there are now concerned not only about the Soviet SS-20s aimed at West European targets, but also by the fact that the Warsaw pact nations have an undisputed lead in conventional forces. It is that asymmetry that the installation of Pershing II and land-based cruise missiles is supposed to correct. If those new missiles are not installed, Europe is left at the mercy of "the unbelievable Soviet Armada arrayed against us," as German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt put it. To defend our interest in Western Europe without nuclear weapons, we would have to commit far more money for conventional troops and weapons. That is the "dove's dilemma": a freeze on nuclear weapons requires a build-up in conventional forces, and increased defense expenditures if we are to assure the nation's security with nonnuclear weapons.

Then there's still another view that says a freeze doesn't come to grips with the basic problem. It leaves us with a great many nuclear weapons. Any such weapon is one too many. So we turn now to the last of our four positions.

5

UNILATERAL REDUCTIONS: IF YOU WANT PEACE, PREPARE FOR PEACE

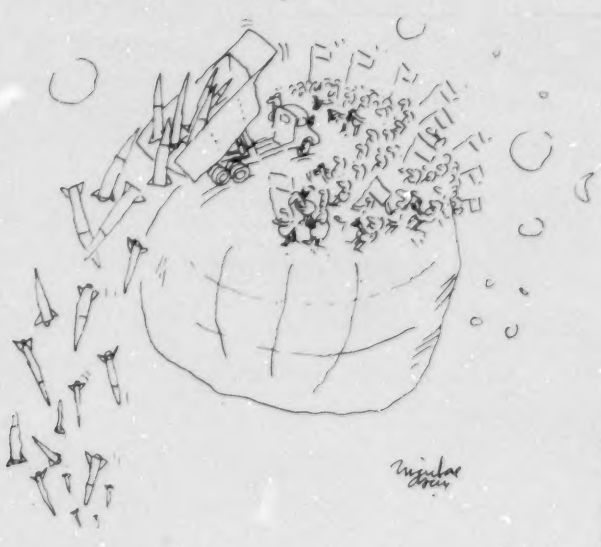
In the early months of 1914, tensions were building throughout Europe, and leaders of various nations were taking measures to protect themselves by strengthening their military might. If war was to break out, they wanted to be ready for it. The fear of confrontation created a self-fulfilling prophecy. Actions that Germany took to build up its army prompted France to do the same, and that — in turn — fueled German concern. Measures that each nation took to bolster its security led to greater anxiety among all the others. The great powers of Europe had no interests that conflicted so seriously as to justify a costly war. But the very momentum of that weapons race led to the outbreak of hostilities by August, and to a catastrophic war.

PREPARING FOR WAR

While some people are struck by the similarities between the situation we face today and what happened in Europe in 1938, when Neville Chamberlain's policy of appeasement turned out to be disastrously wrong, others remember the events of 1914. They point out that war often arises not from outright aggression but from confusions that turn into fatal misunderstandings when nations have prepared for war. To them, the nuclear arms race seems eerily reminiscent of the weapons race that led seventy years ago to a war that was in no one's interest.

To the people who think that we should drop out of the nuclear arms race, one of the most striking lessons of history is that whenever rival powers engage in a massive arms buildup, it eventually leads to war. They feel that it is not only possible that this could happen again but that the very momentum of the nuclear arms race is carrying us toward a new military conflict. What happened in 1914 when that spiralling conflict flew out

> "The biggest threat to peace and security is nuclear weapons themselves. Because there are no circumstances in which their use could be justified, we should get rid of them—and rely on conventional weapons for our defense."



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of control was bad enough. If that were to happen today — at a time when the combined Soviet and American arsenals contain almost a million times the destructive power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima — the result would in all likelihood be absolutely grotesque destruction.

Because that is such an awful prospect, people seem not to recognize it or to take steps to avert it. Both the United States and the USSR have gone on piling weapon upon weapon, replacing old missiles with new ones that are even more destructive. In both countries, the military establishment has a vested interest in justifying itself and a natural tendency to keep the arms race going, to make a persuasive argument for why this year's military technologies — expensive as they may be — are better than last year's, and therefore necessary for our defense.

"We must be careful above all not to invite war by the very steps we take to defend ourselves."

Most people equate security with military strength. But with the great danger posed by nuclear weapons, some people feel that is now the furthest thing from the truth. Security is to be found not in the endless quest for military superiority, they argue, but in the immediate reduction of nuclear arsenals. With so many thousands of nuclear warheads in the world, and each one of them capable of more destruction than years of conventional warfare, what everyone must understand is that international conflicts can no longer be solved by the military — because in the nuclear era a military "solution" is no solution at all.

George Kennan, former ambassador to Moscow and an outspoken critic of the arms race, suggests that citizens go to their leaders with this urgent message: "For the love of God, of your children, and of the civilization to which you belong, cease this madness. You have a duty not just to the generation of the present. You have a duty to civilization's past, which you threaten to render meaningless, and to its future, which you threaten to render nonexistent. You are mortal men. You are capable of error. No one is wise enough or strong enough to hold in his hands destructive powers sufficient to put an end to civilized life on a great portion of this planet. No one should wish to hold such powers. Thrust them from you. The risks you might thereby assume are not greater — could not be greater — than those which you are now incurring for us all."

This, then, is the position we are now going to look at. It says quite simply that nuclear arms should not, must not, cannot be used, and that strategies to contain them are only misleading.

USEFUL WEAPONS, "JUST WARS"

People who take this position are not pacifists who oppose the use of all force. They have no illusions about human aggression or the prospect of somehow abolishing war. They think that precisely because conflict is likely to break out, it is essential to make sure that the weapons available to fight wars are not too terrible. And that is what they find so disturbing about

SYGMA

If we did away with the "nuclear umbrella" in Europe, far more money would have to be spent to strengthen conventional forces.

nuclear weapons. To them, it is crucially important to recognize that nuclear arms are not simply more powerful weapons than those available in the past. They are different in such fundamental respects that they should not be regarded as weapons for the settling of human conflicts.

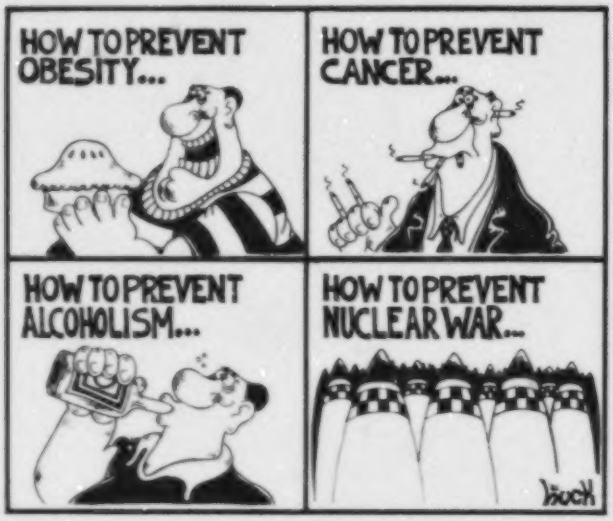
For all the damage that they can cause, weapons are tools intended to serve some useful purpose. They are subject to certain constraints and they can be used in combat toward some specific end. As ruthless as the wars of the past have been, they have by and large been conducted according to certain rules, and those rules remain on the books as a prescription both of the laws of war and of international treaties. The killing of civilian populations is condemned. Medical facilities are off limits. The treatment of prisoners is guided by the Geneva Convention. And a world fit to live in is expected after the war is over.

Those conventions reflect the concept of a "just war," which was defined by St. Augustine in the fourth century and has been at the center of Christianity's approach to war ever since. The traditional conditions for a "just war" are that it be declared by a legitimate authority, for a righteous cause, with good intention, as a last resort, and waged with limited means. Warfare is different, in other words, from mass slaughter, which is why many people regard nuclear war as morally indefensible. As a group of Catholic bishops put it in a 1976 pastoral letter, nuclear conflict "is so savage that one must ask whether war as it is actually waged today can be morally justified." Other weapons injure noncombatants by accident, inadvertence, or callous indifference. But the damage inflicted by nuclear war is less discriminate, and unrelated to battlefields: There is no reasonable guarantee that damage inflicted by nuclear war will be limited to combatants. That is why, from this point of view, atomic warfare cannot be morally justified.

There is another reason why many people feel that nuclear weapons violate the most basic precepts of a "just war." Given the number of warheads that exist today, and the sensitive tripwires that ensure that any act of aggression will be followed by counterattack, there is no such thing as a "limited" nuclear war. This is something that the advocates of nuclear disarmament find particularly troubling about new missiles such as the Pershing II, which is both highly accurate and designed to carry a relatively small nuclear warhead. Its proponents claim that because of those features it is quite selective in the damage it is capable of inflicting. That suggests that nuclear weapons might be used to fight a "limited war" — limited both in its scope and destructiveness.

But today, any weapon that encourages people to think that way is dangerous. It invites confusion about the function of nuclear weapons as instruments of deterrence. The doctrine of deterrence specifies that we have nuclear weapons not to use them, but to keep the enemy from using theirs against us. Yet those who seek the renunciation of nuclear weapons view the very idea that a nuclear exchange, once begun, might be limited in its effects, as a dangerous fantasy. Even the small, so-called "tactical" atomic weapons are infinitely more destructive than conventional weapons. It is highly unlikely that the response to even a "surgical" strike on a military target would be similarly constrained — and that the "exchange" would stop there.

Neither the United States nor the USSR could "win" a nuclear war. Any such war would be so destructive as to render



Gary Huck, Rothko Cartoons

the concept of victory meaningless. Since nuclear bombs could not be used to promote the interests of the society that employs them, from the perspective of those advocating nuclear disarmament it is misleading to think of them as potentially valuable weapons. It is far more accurate to think of them as instruments of mass suicide. And that, the argument goes, is why we should turn our backs on them.

DROPPING OUT OF THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

Those advocating unilateral disarmament insist upon three points. The first is that we must make a fundamental distinction between conventional and nuclear arms, between those that can be used as weapons, properly speaking, and those that cannot. The second point is that nuclear weapons could not possibly be used in combat without raising the strong possibility of escalation into a general nuclear disaster. Third, since there is no issue at stake in our relations with the USSR — nothing that we want, nothing that we hope to avoid — that could conceivably be worth the cost imposed by nuclear war, the possibility that such a war might take place is what is most to be feared.

We must find a way out of our current dilemma. Freezing the arms race is not enough because it would still leave us with an intolerably high level of nuclear weapons. But there is an alternative, a bold departure from the path we have followed over the past generation, and one that gets to the heart of the problem. If you really want peace, prepare for peace. Since there are no circumstances in which the use of nuclear weapons could be justified, we should get rid of them by ourselves, if necessary — and rely upon conventional weapons for our defense.

The fact that we used these bombs in Japan 38 years ago is regarded by those who take this position as a regrettable example of the resort to extreme and indiscriminate force, and as a clear warning that they should never be used again. Now that our adversaries have nuclear weapons too, these have become instruments of mass suicide, whose elimination from our arsenals we ought to seek at the earliest possible moment. The advocates of this kind of nuclear "pacifism" accept the need for an adequate national defense, but deny the usefulness of nuclear weapons as a part of the defense effort. They recognize that force is, and will continue to be, a basic ingredient in human affairs. Since nuclear weapons provide no satisfactory base for a defense effort, they urge that we depend for our defense on conventional arms that can be used more flexibly, and in a more discriminating manner, to defend the nation's interests.

"Freezing the arms race is not enough, because it would still leave us with an intolerably high level of nuclear weapons."

RISKS, COSTS, AND CONSEQUENCES

But what would happen if the United States simply abandoned its nuclear weapons? Critics of unilateral nuclear disarmament regard this as a rash measure that would throw the whole

international order into disarray. They maintain that the United States must have nuclear weapons because in conflict with the Soviet Union we could not prevail without them. They fear that by choosing to turn our backs on nuclear weapons, we are inviting attack — not just on us but also on our allies. Many people believe that if they were not deterred by the threat of nuclear counterattack, the Soviets would launch a devastating attack and bring us to our knees.

Even if other nations followed our example and gave up their nuclear weapons, the situation would be inherently unstable. In a world from which nuclear arms had been eliminated, the first nation — or terrorist group — that decided that it wanted to threaten or dominate others through their use would be able to influence events to a far greater extent than in a heavily armed world. Since nuclear weapons can be easily hidden and quickly manufactured, there is no realistic prospect of completely eliminating them, even if the superpowers decided to get rid of their nuclear arsenals.

Those who propose that the United States — alone, if need be — get rid of nuclear arms regard each of these as serious concerns, not to be taken lightly or quickly dismissed. They are particularly concerned about the charge that unilateral nuclear disarmament on America's part would seriously weaken our commitment to our European allies, and greatly reduce the credibility of our commitment to come to the defense of Western Europe if it is attacked. The fact that the Warsaw pact nations have more troops and conventional weapons than NATO suggests to many people that without its nuclear "umbrella" NATO nations would be very vulnerable. The response is that while a substantial buildup of our troop strength and conventional weapons in peacetime would be no easy thing to accomplish, by doing so we could in fact deter aggression without nuclear weapons. Our defense and the defense of our allies will cost even more than it does today, but that is a small price to pay if it substantially reduces the threat of nuclear holocaust.

What the debate over nuclear arms and national security comes down to, in part, is a question of how you assess various risks, and their respective dangers. Does the gun that some people keep in their bedside drawer to protect against burglars pose a greater threat than the burglar himself? Does the very existence of a nuclear arsenal containing over a million times the destructive power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima pose a greater danger than the foreign aggressors it is supposed to protect us against? Do the dangers of nuclear holocaust outweigh the risks of that "leap into the unknown" that nuclear disarmament would pose?

Those who advocate abandoning our nuclear arms don't deny the risk. They do consider the danger posed by nuclear weapons and the probability of their eventual use to be so great as to outweigh that risk.

"The risk of extinction has a significance that is categorically different from, and immeasurably greater than that of any other risk, and as we make our decisions we have to take that significance into account. Up to now, every risk has been contained within the frame of life; extinction would shatter the frame. We have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species. Our humility should inspire us to reverence and caution, and our reverence and caution should lead us to act without delay to withdraw the threat we now pose to the earth and to ourselves."
—Jonathan Schell

Ed Gamble. Courtesy *Florida Times-Union*, Register & Tribune Syndicate

"It is the existence of international tensions, not nuclear weapons, that lies at the basis of this conflict. The only real hope for peace lies in improved relations with the Soviets."

UNDERSTANDING OUR ADVERSARIES

Choosing nuclear disarmament would be a radical departure from past policy, one that would require various changes in our assumptions and beliefs about how to protect the nation's security. Advocates of peace-through-strength regard unilateral reductions as the most serious, even irresponsible threat to peace and stability. In their view, that is a suicidal course to follow. To protect the nation's security, and to be able to come to the assistance of our friends and allies, we have to be prepared to fight all kinds of war, most particularly nuclear war. A unilateral decision on the part of the United States to give up our nuclear forces would be irresponsible in the extreme, a blatant invitation to world disorder. We have certain commitments to our friends and allies around the world, particularly to our allies in Western Europe. To give up nuclear arms would be to abdicate those international responsibilities. As Secretary of State Haig put it a few years ago, "The stakes are too great, and the consequences of error too catastrophic to exchange deterre. ce for a leap into the unknown. In the nuclear age, the only choice consistent with survival and civilization is deterrence."

Yet most proponents of nuclear disarmament feel that one of the most basic changes that needs to take place is in our perceptions of our Soviet adversary. If the people who portray the Soviets as an evil and aggressive power are right, then it would be very foolish indeed to abandon nuclear arms. But many of the advocates of unilateral nuclear disarmament think that one of the basic flaws in our thinking about national security is the assumptions we make about the Soviets.

Some well-informed students of the Soviet Union, such as George Kennan — former ambassador to Moscow, a student of diplomatic history, and one of the chief architects of American policy toward the Soviets in the 1950s — paint a very different picture of Soviet leaders and their intentions from the one that advocates of peace-through-strength profess to see. Where they see an evil and aggressive power building up its military capabilities in preparation for foreign "adventurism" and eventual world dominance, proponents of this fourth approach see something else. They see the leaders in the Kremlin as men who remember their nation's history and have a keen sense of the need for defense against foreign aggression, and real respect for American military power.

As the Russian leaders look abroad, they see more dangers than opportunities, and feel encircled by hostile powers. Time and again — unlike Americans — they have been invaded and devastated by hostile powers. They have had more than their fill of war. The Russian people have not historically been aggressors. And the Soviets' concern with countries about their own borders is not markedly more aggressive than the concern of otner nations — even the U.S.— with countries that border them. The Soviets' chief goal is not plotting foreign adventures

which would impose huge new strains and uncertainties but shoring up their defenses. Their deepest commitment is to the successful completion of programs for the economic and social development of the Soviet people. But Soviet society is deeply troubled by perennial agricultural failures, a shortage of consumer goods, a sluggish economy, labor absenteeism and a lack of discipline, and widespread signs of public cynicism.

In this view, one of the real tragedies of a nuclear arms race justified by the necessity of keeping up with our chief adversary is that it creates the false impression of a total conflict of interest between the two societies, while in fact many of their problems are common ones. There are obvious differences between the two nations in outlook or in ideology, but the anti-Soviet attitudes voiced in this country are often unfounded and unnecessarily hostile — even sometimes amounting to hysteria. As Kennan said in a speech in November, 1981, "I find the view of the Soviet Union that prevails today so extreme, so subjective, so far removed from what any sober scrutiny of external reality would reveal, that it is not only ineffective but dangerous as a guide to political action." The attitude is, of course, mirrored by the Soviet attitude toward the U.S. Time and time again, adversaries have characterized each other in exclusively negative terms. They have endowed their opponents with extremely hostile motives and the most formidable of capabilities as a way of justifying their own military preparations.

There is no way of getting to the source of the conflict unless we take a close and objective look at the Soviets. No matter what we do to reduce or eliminate arms, the ultimate hope for peace lies in the improvement of international relations, and a situation in which we achieve peaceful coexistence with the Soviets. That is why it is so important to revise our assumptions about the Soviets and their intentions.

What is most to be feared, many of the advocates of nuclear disarmament feel, is not the Soviets and their aggressive intentions. It is, rather, that because both sides have such a distorted picture of each other, the fears produced by those distortions will continue to fuel a massive arms buildup — which in turn will lead to greater insecurities and greater dangers. What is to be feared, in other words, is a spiralling weapons race fed by mutual suspicions that leads eventually to armed conflict, just as a similar set of circumstances led in 1914 to a catastrophic war that was in no one's interest. Our current situation is so dangerous, say the people who advocate nuclear disarmament, precisely because we are armed to the teeth with unbelievably destructive weapons. It is those weapons that we must get rid of.

PREPARING FOR PEACE

So the people who believe that the best course would be to drop out of the nuclear arms race entirely take a very different position from the other three approaches we have examined. They see the chief danger not in the number or the nature of the weapons we have to defend ourselves with, or in the intentions of our adversaries who have nuclear weapons, but in the very existence of those weapons. Far from adding new weapons to this country's arsenal or carefully balancing the potential advantages of new weapons against their disadvantages, people who take this position feel that we should simply turn our backs on nuclear weapons, and depend instead on conventional arms. They feel that there is no solution to the nuclear problem other than taking immediate steps to eliminate these weapons of mass destruction from national arsenals. The sooner such a step is taken, the safer we will be.

That is a radical departure from the policy this nation has followed over the past generation. It fundamentally changes a program for national defense that has been built upon nuclear weapons and their unique deterrence value. It requires too a fundamentally altered view of our Soviet adversary. At a time when the spiralling arms race poses an increasing danger, and further arouses fear about how and when these fearful weapons might be used in a "first strike," we have a duty to take immediate and drastic steps. Advocates of nuclear disarmament feel that we must take unilateral steps to reduce that danger.

"Maybe we should take the chance. Maybe it will work. Because armaments and all the money we have spent has not helped toward world peace."
—39 year old homemaker

COMPLEX ISSUES, HARD CHOICES

So in the 39th year of the nuclear era, at a time of growing public concern about international tensions and the possibility of nuclear war, this nation faces a series of tangled and potentially divisive choices. On one level, these are choices about nuclear weapons systems — about whether it is in the nation's best interest to develop the MX, to deploy new missiles in Europe, and to move ahead with new military technologies in outer space. Although we have been examining differing perspectives on those weapons, our purpose in doing so has been less to stimulate discussion about them than to shed light on the differences among these four approaches. What is most important for the public to understand and to debate is not such matters as the attributes of the MX missile, or the size of next year's defense appropriation, but the principles and assumptions according to which defense policy is formulated. The fundamental issue is not which new weapons, if any, we should develop but which of these approaches we should take.

DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS, DIFFERING PRESCRIPTIONS

As we have seen, there are some fundamental differences among the various parties in this debate about such questions as whether it makes sense to continue to build more weapons. Are the nation's interests best served by shoring up our defenses in order to deter the Soviets, or calling a halt to the arms race? If we choose the radical alternative of unilateral nuclear disarmament, and take the "leap into the unknown" that it represents, what would be the consequences of doing so?

> "Many people prefer not to think about how to maintain peace and security at a time of unparalleled danger. But questions of this magnitude can't be left to the experts. And neither slogans nor fear are a substitute for prudent judgment."

The answer to these questions depends in large measure upon the historical lens through which people view recent events. Some feel that unless we are militarily strong, we run the risk of tempting the Soviets with our weakness — and repeating the circumstances that led to World War II. Others are more concerned about avoiding what happened in the summer of 1914, when the great powers drifted into war not because of irreconcilable differences but because no one was able to stop the momentum of increasingly bellicose rhetoric and a massive arms buildup. In their view, we must be careful above all not to invite war by the very steps we take to defend ourselves.

There are basic differences too in how people view the Soviets and their intentions. If you regard them as an evil and aggressive empire that poses a real danger to us and would take advantage of any weakness on our part, it follows that we must make every effort to deter them with superior arms. But if you assume that Soviet leaders are motivated by defensive considerations more so than aggressive intentions, and that they would scale down their military efforts as soon as they felt that could safely be done, then unilateral nuclear disarmament on our part would not pose too great a danger.

People who hold each of these four positions have a distinctive perception of the situation and their own way of

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Richard Wright Courtesy Scripps-Howard Syndicate

thinking about new weapons. The arms controllers are concerned most of all with what is necessary to maintain stability between the United States and the USSR, to keep the two sides talking with each other — and in so doing to keep their leaders from the precipice of nuclear confrontation. Their chief concern is to avoid anything that unduly alarms the other side, anything that would lead to greater instability and heighten the likelihood of anyone starting a nuclear war.

Those who take the peace-through-strength position are concerned chiefly with the unfortunate necessity of deterring an aggressive nation. From their point of view, we have enough arms only when we can say with confidence that our military might is sufficient to deter any other nation from using their weapons against us. For that reason, we must constantly strengthen our nuclear arsenal.

Advocates of a freeze are primarily concerned not with the aggressive intentions of the Soviets, but with the very momentum of the arms race. Their view is that we don't think very clearly about the problem of avoiding war if we think mainly about

"The splitting of the atom has changed everything save our mode of thinking and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe."
—Albert Einstein

Harry Mattison/Liaison

"Becoming numb to the threat of nuclear destruction is perhaps one way to get through daily life, but it is not a solution. Indeed, it may lead us right into extinction."
—Robert Jay Lifton

nuclear deterrence. What we should do to avoid war is to agree with the Soviets to call a halt to the development and production of any new weapons.

Those who favor unilateral nuclear disarmament focus on the awesome destructive power of nuclear arms, no matter whose hands they are in. Since, in their view, the use of nuclear arms could never be justified, we should simply get rid of them. They criticize the arms controllers as well as the advocates of an arms buildup for mistaking the symptoms for the disease. It is international tensions, not nuclear weapons, that lie at the basis of this conflict. The only real hope for peace lies in improved relations with the Soviets.

Since the question of which of these four paths we follow may literally be a life-or-death matter, it is understandable that positions are so fiercely defended and differences are so divisive.

SEEKING SECURITY IN A DANGEROUS WORLD

As difficult as it may be to sort through these various perspectives to a carefully considered judgment, it is essential that we begin to do just that. It is not enough to resort to bumper-sticker slogans or to make quick judgments that reflect the fear we all feel about the bomb, while ignoring the necessity of providing for the nation's security. It is essential that the process of thinking through our options about how to minimize the risk of nuclear war without jeopardizing the nation's security not be confined to a small group of national defense experts and elected leaders. As citizens, each of us is obliged to consider that awesome choice.

As much as we might want to do so, we cannot wish away the tensions that give rise to the arms race or deny the fact that the genie of nuclear power is out of the bottle. Both we and the Soviets — and the other nations in the "nuclear club" — hold in our hands instruments of mass destruction. It is a threat that will not go away. Even if we all agreed to give up nuclear arms, there would be no guarantee that nuclear war could be prevented from happening at some point in the future.

Since the threat of nuclear war is something that we and our children face and that their children will face, there is no alternative but to figure out how to keep nuclear weapons under control. The question is which path is the best path as we search for a way of coexisting both with nuclear weapons and the Soviet Union — without nuclear war.

FOR FURTHER READING

For an informative and readable introduction to the nuclear weapons issue, see *Nuclear War: What's In It For You* (New York: Pocket Books, 1982) written by staff members of Ground Zero, a non-partisan, nuclear war education organization. For a more academic approach, see *Living with Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Bantam Books, 1983) written by the Harvard Nuclear Study Group, a group of six Harvard faculty members.

The arms control perspective is reflected in *Arms Control Today*, the monthly newsletter of the Arms Control Association and in Barry M. Bleckman (ed.), *Rethinking the U.S. Strategic Posture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1982). The peace-through-strength approach is characteristic of publications of the Committee on the Present Danger, most of the articles published in *The Strategic Review*, a quarterly publication of the United States Strategic Institute and W. Scott Thompson (ed.), *National Security in the 1980s: From Weakness to Strength* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1980). The freeze approach is characteristic of *Freeze: How You Can Help Prevent Nuclear War* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982) by Senators Edward O. Kennedy and Mark O. Hatfield. See also the article by one of the founders of the National Freeze Movement, Randall Forsberg, "A Bilateral Nuclear-Weapon Freeze," *Scientific American* 247 (November 1982), pp. 2-11 and an excellent collection of articles, *The Nuclear Weapons Freeze and Arms Control* published by the Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, (79 John F. Kennedy Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138). For those who advocate unilateral U.S. reductions, see the publications of the World Policy Institute (777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017) and Robert Johansen, *The National Interest and the Human Interest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

For an understanding of Soviet nuclear weapons policies, see Ground Zero, *What About the Russians — And Nuclear War?* (New York: Pocket Books, 1983) and David Holloway, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

For useful perspectives on the issue of nuclear proliferation and U.S.-Soviet relations, see a booklet published by the Foreign Policy Association, *Great Decisions, 1983*. (Available from the Foreign Policy Association at 205 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10016, $6.00 plus $.70 postage.)

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2. NUCLEAR ARMS AND NATIONAL SECURITY REPORT

Please answer the questions on both sides of this report only *after* you have attended the discussion or read the booklet. Answer them without reference to your earlier answers. Then hand in both reports to the forum moderator, or mail it in to the Domestic Policy Association in the attached prepaid envelope. (In case no envelope is enclosed, you can send these pages to the Domestic Policy Association at 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45429.)

I Check the appropriate box:

1. If there were a nuclear war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, what would most likely happen to the U.S.? Would it:

   - ☐ Cease to exist as a civilized society
   - ☐ Suffer enormous casualties and losses, but recover within a decade or two
   - ☐ Hardly be affected at all
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

2. Thinking about the arms control agreements the U.S. has signed with the Soviet Union, would *you* say:

   - ☐ The Soviets have probably cheated at every opportunity
   - ☐ The Soviets have probably cheated a little
   - ☐ The Soviets have probably not cheated at all
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

3. When it comes to those same agreements, would you say:

   - ☐ The U.S. has probably cheated at every opportunity
   - ☐ The U.S. has probably cheated a little
   - ☐ The U.S. has probably not cheated at all
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

4. On balance, have the arms control agreements we've signed with the Soviet Union made the world a safer or a more dangerous place?

   - ☐ They've made the world safer
   - ☐ They've made the world more dangerous
   - ☐ They've made little or no difference
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

5. In an overall sense, how would you rate the military strength of the U.S. compared to that of the Soviet Union? Would you say:

   - ☐ We are far ahead of the Soviet Union in overall military strength
   - ☐ We are slightly ahead
   - ☐ We are about even
   - ☐ We are slightly behind
   - ☐ We are far behind the Soviet Union in overall military strength
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

6. Thinking just in terms of nuclear weapons, how would you rate the strength of the U.S. compared to that of the Soviet Union? Would you say:

   - ☐ We are far ahead of the Soviet Union in terms of nuclear weapons
   - ☐ We are slightly ahead
   - ☐ We are about even
   - ☐ We are slightly behind
   - ☐ We are far behind the Soviet Union in terms of nuclear weapons
   - ☐ Not sure/Don't know

II Here's a list of statements. For each one, indicate whether you agree or disagree:

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
7. The whole idea of a nuclear war is so terrifying, I try not to think about it	☐	☐	☐
8. The Soviet Union is the source of evil in the modern world	☐	☐	☐
9. The best way to keep the Soviet Union from starting trouble is to make sure our missiles are bigger and better than theirs are	☐	☐	☐
10. The U.S. should take steps on its own to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world, no matter what the Soviet Union does	☐	☐	☐
11. We are much too fearful of the Soviet Union; they have so many problems of their own, the last thing they want is to start a war	☐	☐	☐
12. If there is a nuclear war, it will probably be started by accident	☐	☐	☐
13. The best way to avoid a nuclear war is to be fully ready to fight one	☐	☐	☐

14. Our best hope for reducing the threat of nuclear war is to take small steps, not big ones, and to keep on negotiating without letting down our guard ☐ ☐ ☐

15. Our best hope for freeing ourselves from the threat of nuclear war is to develop new technologies such as lasers in outer space before the Russians do ☐ ☐ ☐

16. Because of satellites and other sophisticated equipment, we really do not need on-site inspection to learn what the Russians are doing ☐ ☐ ☐

17. It is inevitable that somewhere down the road, we and the communists will end up going to war. ☐ ☐ ☐

18. Nuclear weapons are so complex, citizens cannot realistically contribute to policy discussions and the whole area should be left to the President and the experts ☐ ☐ ☐

19. The very idea of having enough nuclear weapons to blow up everyone in the world many times over is insane ☐ ☐ ☐

20. The Soviet Union is like most other countries in the world — not much better and not much worse. ☐ ☐ ☐

21. It's hard to imagine the awesome responsibility of the President of The United States, but if you had his authority to protect the country and promote the national security, which of the following options would you favor? (check one)

- ☐ A. Build up our nuclear forces to make sure that our missiles and nuclear capability are the best in the world
- ☐ B. Try to balance but not surpass the Soviet Union in terms of nuclear weapons so as to promote stability and not frighten each other
- ☐ C. Negotiate an immediate halt to the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, so that both sides will take no further steps
- ☐ D. Have the U.S. take steps on its own to reduce its number of nuclear missiles, no matter what the Soviet Union may do.
- ☐ E. Not sure

22. Which would you *least* favor?

- ☐ A
- ☐ B
- ☐ C
- ☐ D
- ☐ E

III There's been a debate surrounding each of the weapon systems listed below. Do you have a clear understanding, a general understanding, or no real understanding of the debate about: (check the appropriate box for each)

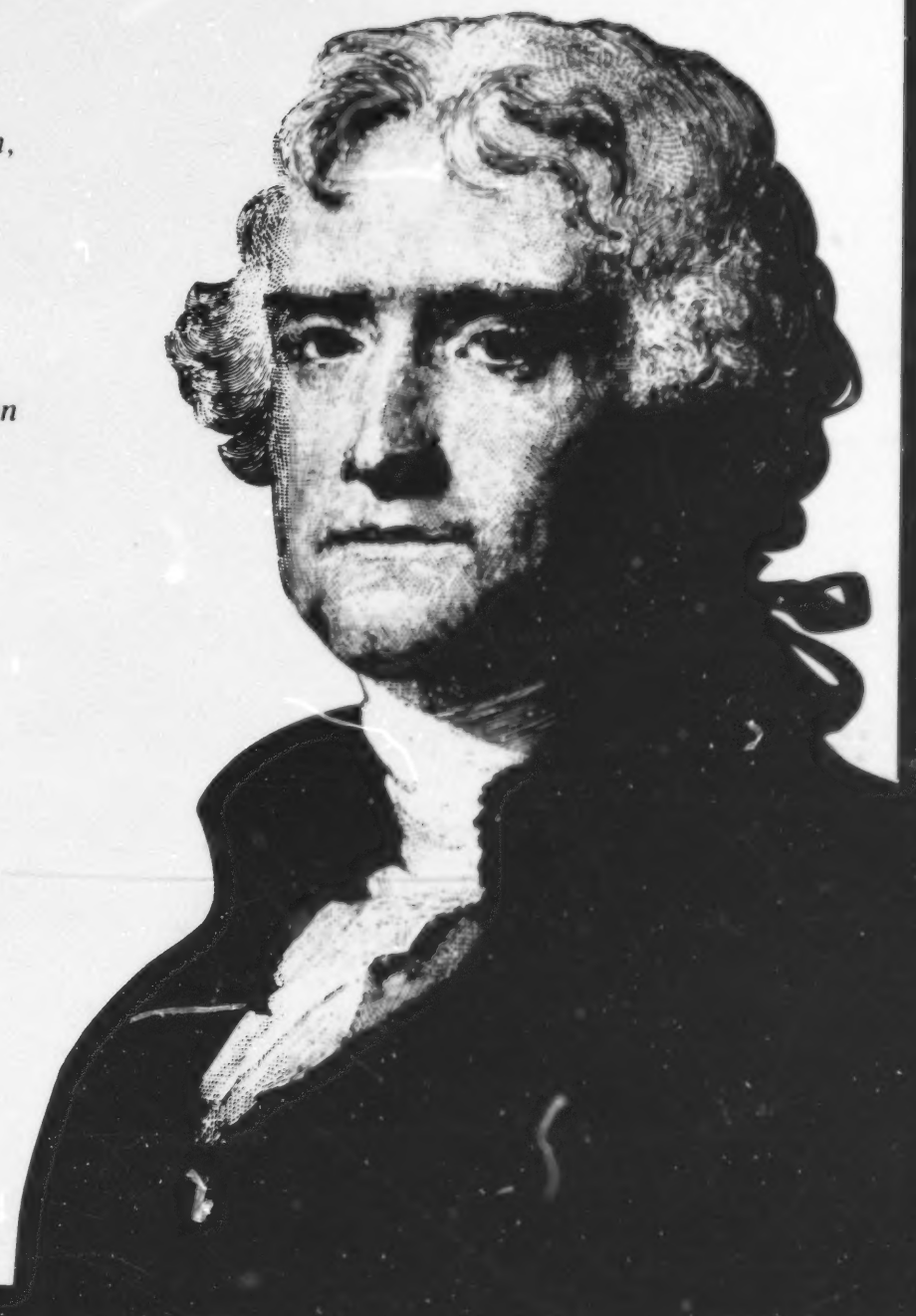
	Clear	General	No real	Not Sure
23. The MX missile	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Pershing missiles in Europe	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Cruise missiles in Europe	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Anti-missile laser weapons in outer space	☐	☐	☐	☐

IV Whether you feel that you have a clear understanding of the issue or not, would you say you favor or oppose each of the following, or do you feel you just don't know enough to decide at this time:

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
27. Building the MX missile — Do you favor or oppose the U.S. building the MX missile, or do you feel that you just don't know enough to decide at this time?	☐	☐	☐
28. Putting Pershing missiles in Europe do you favor or oppose putting U.S. Pershing missiles into Europe, or do you feel that you just don't know enough to decide at this time?	☐	☐	☐
29. Putting cruise missiles in Europe— favor, oppose, or just don't know at this time?	☐	☐	☐
30. Trying to build anti-missile laser weapons in outer space — favor, oppose, or do you feel that you just don't know enough to decide at this time?	☐	☐	☐

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it away from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

Th. Jefferson



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